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A n d A d v i c e s a n d D e v o t i o n s f o r t h e H o l y
S A C R A M E N T .

Written by Mrs. BURNET, late Wife of
the Right Revd. Father in God GILBERT
Lord Bishop of SARUM. *K*

The FIFTH EDITION, Corrected.

To which is added,
Some ACCOUNT of Her LIFE,
By T. GOODWYN Archdeacon of *Oxford*.

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A N
A C C O U N T
O F T H E
Life and Character
O F T H E
A U T H O R.



T being thought fit to publish the Name of the Author of this Book to the World, (which her Modesty did not suffer her to consent to while she lived) that it might be farther recommended by the established Reputation, which she has left behind her, it was judged necessary to add an Account of her *Life and Character*; not so much to inform the present Age, to which she was so well known, that

her Loss is as much lamented, as that of any one in the Station she was in was ever observed to be; but that she may be a standing Pattern to Posterity, who may see in her Life, and Character, a just Representation of a good Christian, adorned with the most eminent Virtues, and Graces of the Gospel.

This is a Task indeed, which I was very much afraid to undertake, and would rather have left it to a far better Hand: But it being put upon me by those, whom I could not deny, who knew my Acquaintance with her in a Friendship of many Years; I have drawn up this following short Account: Short I may say, for I am conscious to my self, that I have represented her but imperfectly. However, I can truly affirm, that it contains nothing but what I have gathered from my own Observation, and from the best Inquiries I could make, of those, that knew her well, and who were equally concern'd with my self, to have nothing said of her, but what might be fully depended upon, and be rather within, than beyond the Truth.

She was born the 8th of November, in the Year 1661. being the eldest Daughter of Sir *Richard Blake*, Knight, the fifth Son of *Thomas Blake*, of *Earontoun* in the County of *Southampton*, Esq; of an eminent Family, and of *Elizabeth* the Daughter of *Dr. Bathurst*, a
Physician

Physician in *London*, one of eminent Piety, and of the most considerable Men of his Profession in his time.

At eleven Years old she began to have a true Sense of Religion, and read with great application the Books that were put into her Hands, but was not quite satisfied with them, aspiring after more solid and sublimer Notions, than what she found in them: On this account it was that more than ordinary Care was taken to make her think meanly of her self, she being bred up in the greatest Privacy possible.

At a little more than seventeen Years of Age, she was married to *Robert Berkely* of *Spetchly* in the County of *Worcester*, Esq; Grandson of *Sir Robert Berkely*, that was a Judge in King *Charles* the first's time: Which was procured, chiefly by the means of that Apostolical Man *Dr. Fell*, late Lord Bishop of *Oxford*, who was that young Gentleman's Guardian, and had taken the Care of his Education. That great Prelate, so famous for his Piety, and Learning, thought that the assisting him in that match was the greatest Service he ever did him.

When she came into that Family, she found this Gentleman's Mother a zealous Papist, and a Woman of a good Life. This put her upon taking especial Care to study her own Religion in a larger Compass, in order to understand the Controversies between our Church

and the Church of *Rome*, that she might be able to preserve her Husband, and her self, from the Artifices, and Insinuations of the Popish Priests, and the Influences of his Mother, who had great Interest in him. But yet, considering the particular turn of his Mind, and the great Deference he had to his Mother, she found her self obliged to be very tender and careful, that he might not be disturbed with unnecessary Disputes about Religion; in which, and in her whole Management in this respect, there appeared a Discretion admired by all that knew her.

At the same time she obliged her self to a more than ordinary Strictness, in all the offices of Piety, and in her whole Conduct, that she might adorn her own Profession by a suitable Practice, constantly governing her self by the Rules of true Religion, and of a severe Virtue; instead of which in the Church of *Rome* is too often found only the outward Shew, and Appearance of them. And therefore living in the Country, where she had much Leisure, she spent great Part of her time in Devotion and Reading: And when she would divert her self with Work, she had generally some Persons to read to her: When her poor Neighbours came to visit her, which, being encouraged by her, they often did, that she might instruct them without seeming to take too much upon her, she

she would frequently read good Books to them.

In this Manner she lived for six Years, being esteemed, and loved by all that knew her; even by those who, on the Account of different Opinions in Religion, were likely to be most prejudiced against her.

In King *James's* Time, when the Fears of Popery began greatly to encrease, and Bishop *Fell* died, who had great Influence over Mr. *Berkeley*, and visited him once a Year with still greater Satisfaction in the happy choice of a Wife, which he had made for him, to prevent his being wrought upon by his Relations, at a Time when they had mighty hopes of their Religion being settled here, she prevailed with him to go to *Holland*, and travelled with him over the seventeen Provinces; where, on the Account of his Relations, they met with an unusually kind Reception in the Popish Provinces: Letters being sent without their Knowledge to *Brussels*, *Ghent*, *Liege*, and other considerable Places; recommending her in a very particular Manner, as one, that had she been, as they call it, of the Catholick Church, her Piety and Virtue were great enough to entitle her to the Character of a Saint.

After this they both fixed at the *Hague*: Where she was soon known, and grew into the esteem and friendship of Persons of the highest

Rank, till about the Time of the Revolution; then they returned into *England*, and went to *Spetchly*, his Country Seat.

Here she went on in the happy Course of Life she was at first engaged in, increasing continually in Knowledge, and good Works. She had generally had some young Persons in her Family, whom she well improved both by her Instructions, and Example; so that there was quickly a visible alteration made in them.

Her Knowledge and Virtue made her every Day more and more taken notice of in that Country. She contracted an intimate Friendship with the then Lord Bishop of *Worcester*, who has left so great a Name behind him for his eminent Piety and Learning, Dr. *Stillingfleet*: He to his death continued in an high Esteem of her, and has been often heard, upon several Occasions, to say, that he knew not a more considerable Woman in *England*, than she was. Nor was she less esteemed by the Dean of that Church, the present Lord Bishop of *Oxford*, who had always a high value for her. But the Lord Bishop of *Worcester*, that now is, having a particular Relation to her, treated her always with such a Respect, and expressed his Esteem of her on all Occasions in such Terms, that her great Humility and Modesty made her ashamed to receive it. Thus she continued to live with Mr. *Berkely*, till the Year of our
Lord

Lord 1693, when he Died, and was Buried with his Ancestors at *Spetchly*.

In her Widowhood, as she had more Time, and Leisure, so she applied it wholly to Devotion, to Reading, to Acts of Charity, and the Offices of Friendship; particularly, she took upon her the Care of her late Husband's Protestant Relations, as if they had been her own; and was indeed a Mother to them all, as long as she lived, shewing a great Concern for them, and Kindness to them, even at her Death. She was also very kind, and obliging to all the rest of his Family.

She had then a very plentiful Income, which she managed with great Prudence, as well as with an high degree of Charity; and was indeed uneasy at all other kind of Expences, but what went that way.

While she continued at *Spetchly*, she kept an hospitable Table, to which the Neighbouring Clergy were always welcome. She paid true Respect to those of them that were in low Circumstances, heartily esteeming them for the sake of their Functions and Labours; she frequently made them Presents of the most useful Books, and to some she generously lent Money, without requiring any Security, expecting only to be paid, when by the Providence of God they might be put into more easy Circumstances.

She

She spent some time in *Worcester* at the Bishop's Palace, with Bishop *Stillingfleet*, and Mrs. *Stillingfleet*, with whom she had a most particular Friendship, and at the Commandary House of *Robert Wylde*, Esq; who took a particular Care of her, and her Concerns: For whom, and his whole Family, she had, as they well deserved it from her, a great measure of Esteem, and Friendship.

Mr. *Berkely*, ordering in his Will a great sum of Money to be raised out of his Estate, to erect an Hospital at *Worcester* for poor People, she had it much at her Heart to see that brought to Perfection, as soon as was possible; and it pleased God to continue her Life, till she saw it was settled. Besides the Care of this, she took upon her several Charges in relation to his Affairs, more than the Law required, in the payment of Debts, and Legacies: And here she continued still one eminent Instance of Charity, to which she had engaged Mr. *Berkely* in his Life time; which kind of Charity is now, by the Blessing of God, spread almost all over *England*, in setting up Schools for the Instruction and Education of poor Children; which she afterwards encreased to a much greater Number.

She spent a good part of her time at *London* with her only Sister, the Wife of Mr. Justice *Dormer*, who was always very dear to her, and she

she had an high value for the great Integrity and Worth of the Judge.

She had early an Inclination to employ her Pen in several sorts of Composition, which she was thought by her Friends to do to so very good Purpose, that it encouraged her to employ much of her Time that way; and while she was a Widow, she made the first draught of the following Book, for her own Use only, consisting of such Rules, and Directions, as she resolved to conduct her self by, and which indeed had been all along the measure of her Practice.

She continued a Widow near seven Years, and then was married to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of *Salisbury*; where she found a Family of Children, which she treated, not with a false Indulgence, nor with an unnatural Severity, but with that Care, and true Concern for their Education, as if they had been her own; and was indeed loved, and respected by them, as if she had brought them into the World; of which the Bishop was so sensible, that he had, by his Will then made, left them entirely under her Care, and Authority, in so absolute a manner, that it has been seldom known, that so much was trusted even to the proper Mothers of any Children. And the Bishop judging right, that he brought Blessing and Happiness enough into his Family, by bringing

ing her self into it, desired her to secure all her own Estate, and Income to her self, with a power to make such a Will as she pleased; to which he bound himself to consent: So she continued the Mistress of all that was her own, and allowed for her own Entertainment that which did not exceed the rate of a Boarding-House, that so she might the more abound in good Works; which the Bishop readily accepted of, though he was willing, and often told her so, that nothing at all should be allowed upon that account; for she had in her self a treasure valuable beyond all Riches: And indeed the Bishop was willing, that all the World should see what a value he set on so much true Worth of the sublimest sort, as he found he possessed in Her.

After this, she extended her Charity farther than she had done before, and indeed instead of giving a double Tenth, or a Fifth part of her Income that way, which is the largest proportion that any have suggested, as taken from the *Jewish* Constitution, she was very uneasy at taking a fifth Part of it to her own Use. She seldom went beyond it, but was much oftner within it; by which means she was able to give many sums away in Charitable Uses; and particularly the number of Children taught at her Expence in and about *Worcester* and *Salisbury* were above an Hundred.

And

And now she grew into a more general Acquaintance, and was continually rising higher in the esteem of the World, as she was more known. She entered into Friendship with some Persons of the greatest Quality, which made no other alteration in her, than the increasing her Zeal of doing more Good, as her Interest was enlarged. The being rich in good works was visibly the greatest design of her whole Life, and that which she most of all delighted in.

Notwithstanding the Interruptions, which a more general acquaintance gave her, she spent as much Time, as she could get to her self, in writing upon Divine, and Moral Subjects; and was prevailed with to consent to the printing of the *first* Edition of this Book, which, as well as the *second*, was all entirely her own composing, without any Assistance or Addition by any Person whatsoever.

This being very much approved of by many of her Friends, she thought she could make it more useful, by adding a great deal to it out of many other Papers, she had by her; and she printed a *second* Edition of it at her own Expence, that she might dispose of it among those, whom she thought most likely to be improved by it.

She kept a constant Journal of her Life, and every Evening spent much time in recollecting her Actions, and Discourse that Day;
and

and would call her self to a strict Account in every particular, that the Errors of every Day past might be avoided in those that were to follow.

She continually laboured under a weak Disposition of Body, which grew upon her at length so much, that it was thought she could not easily get over it. On this Account she was advised to go to the *Spaw* for the recovery of her Health; which Journey she undertook in the Year 1707; and, wheresoever she went, she was received with great marks of esteem, and respect by Persons of the most eminent Ranks.

After her Return, she seemed to be in a much better state of Health; and to bear the Severity of the beginning of the last Winter so well, that her Friends hoped her Constitution was grown stronger than it had been: but it pleased God, that upon the breaking of the Frost, *January 27.* she was taken with a Pleuritick Fever, the symptoms of which were not violent, nor were her Friends at first apprehensive of her Danger; but her Lungs being weak, in a few days she sunk under it, and died *Feb. 3. 1708.* She was buried at *Spetchly* by her former Husband, according to a Promise she had made him, as appears by this clause in her Will: "I will that my Body be buried in the Parish-Church of *Spetchly*, in the County of *Worcester*,"

“ *ster*, in a vault made by me for my former
“ Husband, *Robert Berkely*, Esq; and my self.
“ I order this to fulfil a Promise I made to him,
“ not out of any want of Respect or Kindness
“ to my present Husband, who has by his
“ great Kindness and Confidence deserved from
“ me all the Gratitude and Acknowledgments
“ of Love and Respect I can testify.

And thus I have given a very brief Account
of some of the most remarkable Circumstances
of her Life, in which she must appear a bright
example of the most eminent Virtue, in a private
Station; but I should not do Justice either
to her, or to the World, if I did not enlarge
a little more upon her Character; in which, if
I should be thought to have said too much, by
them that were not acquainted with her, I am
confident what I say, will be judged by them
that did know her, to fall far below her Character.

There needs the less be said, because the
following Book is a just Representation of her;
it giving the most exact description of her Progress
in every part of her Duty, in which there
is nothing said that proceeded from an heated
Imagination, which carries some to greater
heights than are perhaps consistent with human
Nature; but the whole, is the result of
her own Experience; and she has given no
other Rules and Directions, but those by
which

which she lived, and upon a Trial of them, found them to be practicable, by those especially in her Circumstances; and to be of the greatest Use towards forming in them just Notions of Religion and Virtue, raising them up to suitable Affections, and to the ordering the whole course of their Lives according to the Profession of the Gospel of *Christ*.

She knew exactly how to distinguish between the *means* and *end* of Religion, and the necessity of *joining them both together* in her Practice, so as that she came up to the strictest rules of Piety in her Devotions, both in private and publick, especially in her frequently receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and as she was heartily affected to the constitution of the Church of *England*, and zealous for the truest Interest of it; so she was fully persuaded that the best Evidence and Testimony she could give of this, was in a strict government of her *Passions*, in a constant care and watchfulness over her whole Conduct, and in abounding in all kinds of good Works.

She had no skill in the learned Languages, but having made the understanding of the Scriptures her chief Study; by the help of *English* Commentators, and the assistance of those of the Clergy with whom she most frequently conversed, and did often discourse about texts of Scripture that were obscure to her,

her, she attained to a great degree of Knowledge in them. Though she read them much, yet she seldom employed her time in the more intricate Subjects, which are out of the common way, and have no general Use; but spent it in those of the greatest Weight, in which she attained to a very high measure of Knowledge. Tho' her Mind was naturally inquisitive, her Apprehension quick, and her Judgment solid, yet she confined her Inquiries to a few things; therefore when she had made some Progress both in Geometry and Philosophy, she laid these Studies aside, tho' she had both a Genius and a Relish for them. She considered the *one thing necessary*, and applied her self wholly to that which related to it; and even in that, she valued Knowledge only as it purified the Mind. Her chief care was to govern her Passions, and to subdue all her Affections to created Objects, and to elevate her Soul into an entire Resignation and Conformity to the holy Will of God.

When she conversed with Divines and Scholars, who were well known to her, she would take a great deal of pleasure in talking of Subjects suitable to their Profession, and would sometimes engage in Disputes, which she managed in such an agreeable way, as if she had equally studied the same Subject with them. But in Company, where any discourse of this kind might be thought unsuitable, she made

no appearance of Knowledge above the common Rank.

Some particulars of her Charity have been mentioned in the Account of her Life. She did much good to many Persons, without letting them know who was their Benefactor; but the way of her disposal of her Charity, and the many Offices of Friendship she did for those she had a good Opinion of, doubled the Obligations which she laid upon them. When she had promised a kindness to any of her Friends, they needed not be solicitous to put her in Mind of it, for when they took their leaves of her, she would ask them whether they had any thing more to say to her, that so the most timorous and modest might have Courage to mention it. Those who conversed most with her, soon observed that nothing was more acceptable to her than the naming worthy Objects for her Charity, and then she with Joy set about the relieving of them, esteeming the best Use of Riches, to be the distributing a large Share to such as wanted it, and who deserved well to be supplied.

As her Bounty to indigent Persons reached to a large Compass, so her Charity was extensive to all those that differed from her in matters of Religion, especially where they seemed to be Sincere, though Erroneous; and this not only to the Divisions among Protestants, but
also

also to the Papists, of whom, as she had occasion to know more, by reason of her first Husband's Relations, so she truly valued whatsoever she observed to be commendable in them.

But that this Character of hers did not at all hinder her from being steady to her Principles appeared, as in the whole course of her Life, so in her last Will; in which she declares, " That she desired to die, as she lived, in a full
" Communion with the Established Church of
" this Realm, and in a Communion of Charity
" with the whole Body of Christians throughout the World, especially with all that worship God in Spirit and in Truth, and are not
" defiled with Idolatry and Superstition.

Her Thoughts of Religion were Generous and Noble, not confined to narrow Limits, or low Measures; she looked on those as the best Representations of it, that made it appear Beautiful and Lovely, and begot an internal Purity of Heart, with an exalted Zeal and Life in the Affections, and that gave an internal Sensation of Divine Matters; yet she guarded strictly against all Enthusiasm, and would not affect to be wise above what is written in the Scriptures. In the last years of her Life, she delighted most in Books that treated of the inward Life of Religion, of the Separation of the Soul from all Creatures, and of an intire Resignation of every thing to the Will of God. But above

all, she was most constant in Reading the Scriptures daily, and used to say, that as to the practical Parts of them, the reading them with a Spirit of Humility and Simplicity of Heart, together with earnest Prayer, and an ardent desire to understand the Will of her heavenly Father, was the best means to know of any doctrine whether it was of God, or not; so that she read the Bible rather as a mean to raise her Soul to great views of God, and to a noble Sense of solid Virtue, than out of Curiosity, to encrease her Knowledge, or to adorn her Expressions; and indeed, she spoke sometimes of those matters in strains that looked like Raptures, and charmed as well as they animated those who heard them.

A Person of such Piety and Goodness, cannot be supposed to have had many Enemies; but where ill Offices were done her, she forgave them so heartily, that by her treating those who had injured her, it plainly appear'd that she had overcome all Resentment, and well knew how to return Good for Evil.

Her Conversation was so entertaining and engaging, that it was no wonder that her Acquaintance was very great, which was much encreased after her second Marriage. She took formal Visits to be one of the burdens of Life, yet never would neglect to pay any civility that might justly be expected from her.

In

In her general way of Discourse, she suited her self to the Company she was in, as far as was consistent with the Rules of Decency and Charity, and that with a Spirit and lively Cheerfulness, that render'd her extreamly acceptable to all People.

If any Persons were spoken against in Company where she was, she would, if there was room for it, take Pains to vindicate or excuse them, or else turn off the Discourse to some other Subject.

As she was generally cheerful in Company, so she set a most strict watch over her Lips, without seeming to do so. She gave the greatest encouragement to an innocent freedom in Conversation, that ever any one of her strict Piety was observed to do. For indeed, though she was severe upon her self in the opinion she had of her own conduct in many Austerities, such as Fasting and Watching, which might probably very much contribute to the weakening her Constitution, yet she carefully avoided all Appearance of Severity towards others, and all Ostentation of Piety; nor was she ever apt to censure those that did not come up to the Strictness she obliged her self to.

Her Design indeed, was to render a Strictness in Religion as agreeable to all Companies, as was possible; and to shew that it did not

take off from that Easiness and Freedom which is the Life of Conversation; and few ever succeeded better in recommending it thus to the World, than she did.

Her Humility appeared in her whole Conversation in a becoming Modesty towards her Superiors, in an obliging Civility to her Equals, and most eminently in a kind Condescension to those that were below her. No body despised more the Pomps of this Life than she did; but yet she conformed to that decency of Apparel and way of Living, that was suitable to the rank she had in the World, tho' in the plainest manner, yet not affecting singularity in any thing.

She was most constant in her Friendships, and was always a true and faithful Friend. In the Friendship she had with those that were above her, she used an honest Freedom, that was agreeable to her constant Sincerity: tho' from a natural Modesty, and not out of a love of Ceremony, she treated them often with more Respect than they wished. She carried her self to them with a regard full of Discretion and Conduct, taking hold of all Opportunities in serving them in their greatest Concerns, which she always proposed to her self, as the best end of Friendship, adding her Prayers for them; which was a debt she paid to all her Friends very punctually.

She

She would freely give her Advice to those she was most intimate with; and would endeavour to convince them of their Mistakes, and take notice of their Failings, in a mild and gentle way, where she saw they would bear it; and she was always ready to assist them in every respect to the utmost of her Power; for she was of a very active Temper.

The truth is, she was a most excellent manager of her time to the best Advantage of others, as well as of her self. She prayed, read, and wrote so much, that it might be thought she must have confined her self almost wholly to her Closet; and yet she did so many services for her Friends, was so busily employed in doing good, and was so easy of access, that it could hardly be supposed that she allowed her self time enough for Retirement.

She laboured, as was said before, under a weak constitution of Body, but had such a natural liveliness of Spirit, that this, together with the due sense of the Obligation she lay under of submitting to the Hand of God in every thing, preserved in her a wonderful cheerfulness and easiness of Temper in all her Indispositions.

Those coming frequently upon her, had so inured her to Patience, that she bore the common accidents of Life with great Calmness; and it could scarce be observed, that any thing relating to her private Affairs, ever gave her

much Uneasiness; but her concern for the Publick and her Friends was so great, that any Misfortunes or Apprehensions which related to them, affected her perhaps more sensibly than might be thought suitable to her private Station. And as I have often heard him, who had reason to know her perfectly well, say, That her zeal for the Publick Good, and that eagerness of Spirit which kept her intent upon it, was the single thing he had ever observed in her that looked like Excess; which as it preyed upon her own Spirits, so on some occasions it might set too great an Edge upon them.

She had so just a sense of the Danger of Popery, that she often blessed God for the *Revolution*, and defended it with Zeal. This possessed her so much, that she was not a little grieved, when she saw some, who she believed were truly zealous for the Protestant Religion, set themselves against that *Great Work*, and engage in an opposition to that which was necessary to secure and preserve it. Nor was it easy to her to hear some detract from the Merit of those who had acted a great part in bringing it about, or in supporting it: She paid a just and grateful Duty to our GREAT DELIVERER, King *William*, to whom she was a most zealous and faithful Subject; as she was, after Him, to HER MAJESTY, Queen *Anne*, who now fills that throne so Gloriously, which
he

he had so happily settled. And it is not to be denied, but that the Behaviour of some, whom she otherwise esteemed much, put her sometimes into some Emotion.

Notwithstanding this, she took great Care that it should not alter her temper toward any Person that had not the same Sentiments with her self; and where she observed any uneasiness among others on such occasions, she was very earnest to restore a good Understanding between them. She was indeed, very careful to avoid all occasion of Contention or Quarrels on any account whatsoever; and when they arose, she could not rest till she had done what she could to put a stop to them; and where she saw any unhappy difference arise among her Friends, she interposed with all the diligence imaginable, in order to work a Reconciliation; in which she was often observed to have very good Success.

In her last Sickness, the distemper falling upon her Lungs, she was not able to speak much, but shewed all along a full Resignation of Mind to the Will of God, and a patient enduring the Pains she felt. She expressed all that inward Joy and Satisfaction of Mind which a Life so well spent as hers was, gave her just ground to have; and after her voice quite failed her, she, as things were spoken in her Hearing, shewed, by the lifting up of her
Hands,

Hands, and other Signs, in what an happy calm she then possessed her Soul, how easy and comfortable her Passage was, and how earnestly she recommended the Practice of true Religion to all about her; and thus departing this world full of good Works, she entred into the Joy of her Lord, there to receive an ample Reward for them.

And now, notwithstanding it is impossible not to lament so great a Loss as that of her is; yet I cannot but think it a great Blessing of God upon this present Age, that it has produced a Person so remarkable for Piety and Virtue as she was; and I hope her Example will have that good Influence upon others, who have the like Advantages that she had, and will excite them to an hearty Imitation of all her Christian Graces and Virtues; that so the Honour of our holy Profession may be recovered in an age of Profaneness and Infidelity, by a visible appearance of these noble fruits which the Gospel naturally produces where it is heartily believed. God grant that a due Reflection on her Practice, joined with the excellent Instructions in the following Book, may produce such happy Effects in the Minds of all that read it.

T. GOODWYN.



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ADVERTISEMENT

Written by the

A U T H O R

T O U C H I N G

The Manner of using the following De-
votion and Passages of Scripture.



THE great end of all Religion and De-
votion is, to restore the depraved na-
ture of Men to its original Perfection,
the paying all due homage and obedience
to the Author of his Being, which con-
sists chiefly in being Good and doing
Good; consequently the Devotion that is rational, and
will recommend us to God, must be such as will make us
truly wise and good; and that can never be the bare
repeating well composed Forms, but a careful observing
our Hearts, our Thoughts, Words, and Actions,

the

xxviii Advertisement by the Author.

the purity of our Intentions, and the simplicity of our End; if our actions are agreeable to our Prayers, and if they arise from a belief that God is, and is a Rewarder of them that serve him; and not out of human Respects, out of Custom, or fear of Infamy, out of Interest, or desire to please Men, Ostentation, or Vanity; in all these Instances, both the Intention is corrupt and the End base, so the action can never be good, nor likely to have any good Effects.

To prevent such a fruitless Devotion, here is all along mixed Rules of Life, and frequent Examinations and Reflections suitable to those Rules, with some short pious thoughts directed to God, or respecting our selves. And the obligation to those Rules is established by the only sure Authority of holy Scripture, which method (or any of the like Nature, and better performed) will, if faithfully practised, prevent any gross Ignorance of our selves.

Indeed, it is hardly possible that an honest Mind can be greatly defective in the knowledge or practice of things necessary to its Perfection and Happiness, if it often stop to compare it self with the beautiful picture of true Virtue, as represented in the sacred Scripture, and applied by the impartial reasoning of a sincere Heart, though it has not the advantage of a very elevated Understanding.

This Collection of Rules and Devotions, put together for private Use, and very defective, from the low capacity of its Compiler, was published to excite such as are better qualified to do something more perfect of this sort; and in the mean time, to give a little assistance to such young and ignorant Persons as are truly desirous to purify their Hearts and Lives by the duties of Religion, and not think themselves very good Christians, because they refrain from scandalous Vices, and repeat many Prayers.

But

But it is not meant to discourage any from other Methods found more agreeable or conducive to the end proposed; and much less to prevent any from the exercise of their own Thoughts, in Meditation, Reflection, and Prayer; but only by setting down a few examples on several Subjects, to make it more easy for them to apply those or the like Rules, so as may best suit their own Circumstances.

For which reasons, all the larger Devotions are broke into short Sentences and small Divisions, that what can't be said with Truth, or is not suited to the apprehensions or liking of any, may be left out; for the Heart and the Understanding should go along in all our Devotions: Also if time will not allow greater Inlargement, or if the mind is indisposed by Illness or Multiplicity of necessary Business, but particularly that a small pause may be made between each Sentence, and the thoughts allowed to enlarge freely, if so inclined, or any circumstances of Life present new matter of Confession, Thanksgiving, Intercession, Prayer for some particular Grace, or against the power of some Temptation or Infirmary, &c. resting on each sentence till the mind is filled with the Beauty of the Virtue you desire, the Evil of the Fault or Infirmary you lament, till you penetrate the excellency of the Truth you profess to believe: In short, till you find you apprehend, and are in earnest in what you are about.

Every body finds a great difference between those expressions of Friendship which are forced from us, by the bright Idea of our Friend's Virtues, and what only comes from the cold Reflection that such an one is capable to do me Good or Hurt; for this comes from without, and produces only an outward Regard; but the shining Perfections of a good Man have an inward Power, that we can't help admiring. So our Devotions and Acts of
Virtue,

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Virtue, if they arise from a sense of the divine Perfections, and that our Happiness improves with our real Holiness : This plants in us a root of living Piety ; but if we only consider God as a severe Law-giver, who can and will punish our Rebellions : This may indeed force an Awe, and so much Obedience as we think will satisfy our Judge, but can never produce a love to God, or a delight in our Duty.

Of all Hypocrisy, that is the most dangerous by which we deceive our selves ; what is generally called Hypocrisy, the deceiving the world by appearing what we know we are not, is so gross, that we can't but know it, and feel an inward Shame, which may awaken us to Repentance : but when it is so refined, as to impose on our selves, which I apprehend was really the Hypocrisy of the Pharisee in the Parable ; then it is fatal indeed, and shuts out its only Remedy, true Repentance.

To prevent which Deceit, is the chief design of mixing such frequent Examinations and Self-reflections with Prayer, to bring you to an habitual Observation of the true motives and ends of all your Actions, in order to the sincere knowledge of your self, which is the Foundation of all true Wisdom and Virtue.

Some may object, that the following Rules of Devotion require so much Time and Retirement, that there are very few whose circumstances will allow them so much Liberty ; but if they please to observe, this is always considered and allowed for : 'Tis hoped every body will acknowledge, that no one's Business, much less Diversion, should exclude the the daily Worship of God, Morning and Evening : And this is all that is mentioned as of absolute Obligation, together with the attendance on the daily Publick, or Family Prayers, as frequently as the reasonable Hindrances

drances of necessary Business, proper to the several Stations and callings of Persons, will allow.

The remaining subjects of Devotion are only recommended to those who, without neglecting the duties of their Station and Family, have leisure for them, or for some part of them. The whole private Devotions will not take up much more than two Hours; and when it is considered how much time is spent in dressing and useless Diversions, and how much in a sauntering Idleness, by the poorer, as well as the richer sort, it can't but be concluded it is rather unacquaintedness with the pleasures of Devotion, from Ignorance or corrupt Passions, than want of Time, that makes a few minutes thought sufficient for a duty so delightful and of so great Advantage, and so many hours not too much to spend in Idleness and Vanity.

However, those who have not leisure every Day, may have it on some Days, at least on times of extraordinary Devotion, to consider what Virtues they are defective in, or what Irregularities prone to, and make that the subject of their Meditation and Prayer, concluding with Intercessions and Thanksgivings suitable to the foregoing Meditations; and this will give no great interruptions to our Business, or innocent Diversion, but teach us to regulate both by the Rules of Wisdom and Virtue.

Our Prayers cannot inform God of what he knows not; but they may and ought to teach us the knowledge of our selves; therefore the more of self-reflection is mixed with them, the more they will conduce to that great end of all Devotion, the purifying our Heart and Life, though too many seem to think that praying is only saying so many Words, and offering to God what is fit to be said, without ever examining whether it comes from the Heart, or suits their Condition; and who, after praying many
Tears,

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Years, hardly know if they have, or if they want the Virtues they pray for. One great cause of this is, that the whole time of Retirement is spent in repeating so many words without ever reflecting or comparing their Prayers with the rules of God's Word, or their own Hearts and Practice.

The Examples of Scripture Meditations are not many; because it would destroy my End, which is to encourage others to offer God their own Desires, and not to read in a road what is composed by others, but to make such applications as suit their present State; for what comes from others, may be quite foreign to their Circumstances, which destroys sincerity and the knowledge of our selves, and leads us into a most dangerous Hypocrisy and Self-deceit.

Who can think, that has any rational thought of God, that He does not prefer the sincerity of the Heart to the eloquence of the Tongue? And what honest Man does not like a plain honest expression of Respect and Submission, more than all those artificial complements that only show the wit and art of the Speaker?

But above all, I recommend to young People the storing their minds with variety of practical passages of Scripture, particularly such as their defects make most necessary; which they will find of great Use, both in the exercises of their Devotion and conduct of their Lives.

Indeed the Bible is the best Prayer-Book, and is full of noble Thoughts, that may by an ordinary Capacity, with a little Alteration, be turned into the Language of Devotion, and where time is not in your dispose, variety of Ejaculations so composed are better than a long continued Form, which is often hurried over without Attention, or broke off abruptly.

I have mentioned pious Reflections to be mixed with the common actions of the Day; but by this I mean not to be so understood, as if it was so necessary that all our actions should begin with an express Intention of offering them up to God, so as to make the Omission sinful. All I intend is, an endeavour that our habitual Intentions should be to obey God, and that our actual intentions may be conducive to a spiritual Life; but by no means to entangle your conscience in every Omission or Forgetfulness, which the hurry of Business, Intenseness in Study, Conversation, &c. may often occasion, even in Persons generally recollected.

Many of the Devotions are transcribed out of other Books; and had the Publisher known where to have found what was wanted, the rest had been so too; but it is hoped there is nothing that has not better authority than the Collector, who renounces whatever is contrary to the Scripture and right Reason, if through Ignorance any Errors have been advanced.

To those whose better Judgments carry them not only to see, but to censure the very many defects and faults of this Book, the only Apology is, that it was not at all designed for them, but only for such whose Ignorance or Youth may need such Assistance. This right Intention of promoting the Good, though but of the meanest, will, it is hoped, soften the censures of such as too nicely consider the fitness of every Circumstance, at least, it ought to make those censures sit easy, since that imaginary evil is not to be put in the balance with the comfort of having endeavoured to encourage any in the pursuit of Virtue, that is their Happinefs and their real and lasting Good.

A Part of this was drawn up many years ago, and enlarged at several times, which may have made the Me-

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thod a little confused, and occasioned some Repetitions ; but since what is most necessary for us to know and do, should be often thought on and brought in View, it was not thought worth while to correct these Repetitions, which might serve better to fix necessary Truths, in the memory of young and ignorant Persons.

Note also, That whatever you pray for your self, or others, may and ought to be returned in praises for your self or others, when obtained, or while continued.



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THAT Christians, whose Devotion leads them to the making use of this Book, may not be at a loss, amidst so great variety of *Directions* and *Meditations*, to use them all sometimes, and yet not be overburdened with too much at once, the following

METHOD

For the more regular, and orderly using the several Meditations and Reflections in this Book, may be taken.

Note, The *Passages* referr'd to, may generally be read, and used either before or after the Morning and Evening Prayers for a *private Person*, in part, or the whole, as every one sees fit.

LORD'S DAY MORNING.

Rules for the *Lord's Day*, p. 173, to 192.

LORD'S DAY EVENING.

Before Prayer read, the *Directions*, p. 192. And the Act of Faith in Christ, with that of Thankgiving

ing after it, p. 232. And Reflections on the *Baptismal Engagement*, p. 255.

MUNDAY MORNING.

Read the fifth *Rule*, together with the general Dispositions, and Qualifications for Prayer, p. 9.

MUNDAY EVENING, or NOON.

The Reflections about the use you make of the Estate God has given you, p. 297.

TUESDAY MORNING.

After Prayer, the Rule for Eating, p. 100.

TUESDAY EVENING.

Reflections on the Temper of the Mind, p. 288.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

The Rule for Thinking and Recollection, p. 77.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

The Meditations on Charity, p. 54.

THURSDAY MORNING.

The first Part of the Rule for Conversation, p. 105.

THURSDAY EVENING.

The second Part of the Rule for Conversation, p. 111. with the Rule for Silence, p. 118.

FRI-

FRIDAY MORNING.

Reflections on the use you make of outward Goods,
p. 297.

FRIDAY EVENING.

Meditations for Examination and Reflection, p. 23.

SATURDAY MORNING.

Reflections upon Death, p. 268.

SATURDAY EVENING.

After Prayer, the two first Rules, p. 1, 3.

LORD'S DAY MORNING.

After Prayer, the Intercession, 239. And the
Act of Thanksgiving, p. 237.

LORD'S DAY EVENING.

Rules for the Lord's Day, p. 190. to the end of
the Chapter, p. 87.

MUNDAY MORNING.

The Rules for Eating, p. 100. or those for Dref-
sing, p. 87. for the Beautiful and Deformed, p. 90.

MUNDAY EVENING.

The Directions, p. 29. with the general Interces-
sion, p. 36.

TUESDAY

TUESDAY MORNING.

Meditations on Charity, p. 55.

TUESDAY EVENING.

Rule about Study, p. 83.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

The third Rule before Prayer, The fourth after Prayer, p. 5, 7.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

Reflections on the Temper of your Mind, p. 288.

THURSDAY MORNING.

Rules for Business and Work, p. 92.

THURSDAY EVENING.

The short Examination on Work and Business, p. 98. **To which may be added, Reflections on St. Peter's Case,** p. 47.

FRIDAY MORNING.

Meditations and general Thanksgiving, p. 59, to

FRIDAY EVENING.

Meditations for Examination, p. 23.

SATURDAY MORNING.

Reflections on the Baptismal Vow, p. 254.

SATUR-

SATURDAY EVENING.

Whatever has happened to be omitted the Fortnight before, at least some part thereof.

The sixth *Rule*, p. 76. with the short Prayer after it, may be proper to be used after Devotion, any or every Morning.

To be used on proper OCCASIONS.

On *Easter Day*, *Christmas Day*, and *Good Friday*, The Act of Faith, p. 232. and the Meditations, p. 246, 249, are proper.

In EMBER WEEKS.

After your other Prayers, use the Prayer, p. 245.

In *Sickness* and *Affliction*, use the Meditations and Prayers, p. 50.

Upon PUBLICK FASTS.

Always read in the Morning the Directions, p. 120, and the Devotions following. Then add the Meditation, p. 30, and the general Intercession, p. 36.

On *Publick* FASTS about Noon,

The Rules, p. 169.

Before *Night*, the Intercessions for Temporal Blessings, p. 306.

On Private FASTS.

Read the Advertisement concerning Fasting, p. 169.

When

When you *examine* your self,
Read the whole second Chapter, p. 130.

For the COMMUNION.

Munday before it, read the Directions, p. 200.

Munday or *Tuesday*, the chapter about Examination,
p. 130.

Then the Act of Faith, p. 232.

Then after the Examination, the Confession, p. 229.

A little after the Act of Faith following.

The remaining part of the chapter may be used,
as directed, or as Opportunity serves, some *before*,
some *at*, some *after* the Communion.

Any of these Directions may be varied one for another,
as the present Occasion and Circumstances shall require. When a person becomes well acquainted with them,
he or she may adapt them to the more considerable business of each Day.



and Author of all things; from whose power, wisdom, and goodness, we have our Being. Let this produce in you a perfect resignation to his will, and obedience to his government: be thankful for your own and the world's preservation; for the Redemption by Jesus Christ; for God's long-suffering in affording one day more for Repentance; pray that God would enlarge and enlighten your mind, and the minds of all reasonable Beings, in the knowledge of his Will, and of his Nature and infinite Perfections, revealed in his works and word, and produce in you and them a divine faith, a faith working by love, manifested by sincere and universal obedience, and conformity to his will.

EJACULATIONS.

I Adore and worship thee, O eternal Being, Father, Son, and holy Ghost; infinite in Power and Wisdom, perfect in Goodness and Mercy, most just and holy, one God blessed for evermore. I praise thee, O Lord, for all thy mercies; thou art the fountain of all grace and blessing, of all that is good and desirable.

I bless thee for this night's preservation, for thy long-suffering in affording one day more for Repentance: O give with it thy Grace, that I may bring forth the fruits thereof, to thy glory and my own salvation.

O my sovereign Lord and great Creator, renew thy heavenly Image in my soul, defaced and clouded by my sins: make me, O Lord, capable to receive and obey the sacred teachings of thy Word and

and Spirit; and grant that all reasonable Beings may so effectually contemplate thy infinite Perfections, as to be Holy as thou art Holy, pure as thou art pure, and conformable to thee in all thy imitable excellencies.

I will sing of thy power, yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercies in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble, Psal. lix. 16.

I laid me down and slept, I awaked, for the Lord sustained me, Psal. iii. 5.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up, Psal. v. 3.

Cause me to bear thy loving kindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee, Psal. cxlv. 8.

The Second R U L E.



ALLOW no more time for Sleep than health requires: do not indulge Sloth nor useless musings, after you awake: Six or seven hours is enough for most Constitutions.

If slothful in rising, awaken your self by these or the like proper considerations.

WE fear Death, yet love its image: What is life but for the works of life? We wilfully shorten our lives, yet covet many days. The omission of good,

as well as the commission of evil, will make Death unwelcome. *Jonah i. 6. What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, and call upon thy God, that he may think upon thee,* that thou perish not in the storm of temptation: It is sin that has raised these storms, inverted nature, made the world, at first a plain and smooth passage to the heavenly City, now a dangerous sea to those who refuse the conduct of the heavenly Pilot. Prayer may allay these storms; or if they rise upon thee, they shall not sink thee, but bring thee with more honour, and it may be with more speed, to the desired harbour.

Awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light, Ephes. v. 14.

Awake, not only from the death of wilful sin, but from the too fatal lethargy of a cold indifferency, and slothful serving of thy great Benefactor.

What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou shouldst set thy heart upon him? Job vii. 17.

And that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment? Ver. 18.

Try if he will bring forth fruit, that he be not cut down and destroyed as unprofitable.

It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed; because his compassions fail not, Lam. iii. 22.

They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness, &c. Ver. 23.

The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him, Ver. 25.

The Third RULE.

While rising, think thus:

LORD, I am thine by Creation, by Redemption, by my baptismal Covenant, and by frequent voluntary dedications. I confess, thy service is most reasonable and pleasant. I offer to thy divine Majesty, in virtue of the only perfect sacrifice of thy beloved Son, my soul and body. So sanctify, with thy good Spirit, all thy gifts to me, that they may become acceptable unto thee, and may be instruments of thy Glory here, and that I may be a partaker of thy Glory for ever. O Lord, if I am thine, let me not perish who trust on thee: If I go out this day in my own strength, I may be easily overcome; for my enemies are too strong for me: but none can pluck out of thine hand, or from under thy protection. I will be of good comfort, the Captain of my Salvation has overcome the world, and triumphed over all the enemies of my soul, and hath purchased strength for me also to overcome, if I am faithful, and fight under his banner. Lord, remember me this day, that I may remember my Duty and do it: Let thy blessed Angels guard me, that the evil ones hurt me not. Let thy holy Spirit direct and sanctify my thoughts, words, and actions, that they may be duly employed in acts of Piety and Charity, and in the duties of my calling. Accept what is thine, the effect of thy

Grace; pardon what is mine, the weakness of corrupt nature: the Goodness is all thine, the Glory be all thine, now and for ever.

• Lord, I arise to glorify thee, O let thy Grace prevent and follow me, and make me continually ready to every good work, through Jesus Christ.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light, Rom. xiii. 12.

Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, Ver. 13.

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, Ver. 14.

I must work the work of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work, John ix. 4.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, Col. iii. 1.

Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, Ver. 2.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, Ver. 3.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, Rom. xii. 1.



The Fourth RULE.



WHILE dressing, at least before engaging in worldly business or study, employ your thoughts on such reflections as these: If any sin has been committed since your last Examination, if you have indulged Sloth beyond the rules of health, or the like.

2. What opportunities to do Good, what temptations to Evil, that day may present you with.

3. Resolve by God's grace to resist all known and wilful Sins, and to do all known and foreseen Duties, and consider what are the best and most proper means, joined with prayer, to avoid any foreseen temptation; or if that is not fit, or cannot be done, how to resist and overcome them. Say, Why should I fear this temptation that I foresee? greater is he that is for me, than those that are against me. Or if disheartened at the difficulty of any good act, use these or the like reflections.

Why should I be discouraged, or fear the difficulties of this duty? Is it not both honour and pleasure to do well? Is not Virtue best in itself, and that which I admire in others? Besides, has not God promised to reward his Grace received and used, with the increase of Grace and Glory: Grace is the very disposition for Glory, it makes us capable to receive it. Glory is Grace perfected; it is God's goodness, not his sovereignty only, that requires holiness of us;

because without it there can be no happiness. Do not faint in this warfare, it is a glorious victory thou contendest for, and canst not miss of, if thou art faithful to the commands, and reliest on the merit of Christ Jesus, the Captain of thy Salvation.

I have sworn, and I am stedfastly purposed to keep thy righteous Judgments: I have vowed in my Baptism, renewed those Vows often, from a full persuasion of their being most reasonable and good for me to be governed by: I have renounced the Devil, and all subjection to him, declared a war against his kingdom and subjects, renounced the world and all its sinful Vanities, and the fallen corrupted part of my self, and I am still persuaded it is my advantage to continue in this covenant, and I am stedfastly purposed to do it.

I know this sin which I foresee I may be tempted to, is forbidden, and contrary to these my Vows: Or I believe this duty, which I shall have opportunity to exercise, is commanded, and so a part of my positive Vows. I resolve to do this duty, or to resist this sin, for the love of God, and in obedience to him. But alas! my Lord, I am weak, and can do no good thing without thy divine assistance and direction: I cast my self on thee, and confess I owe all to thee. O Lord, hold up my goings, in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not, that I fall not from my good purposes into sin and error.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall, 1 Cor. x. 12.

There shall no temptation taken you but such as is common to men. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you

Part II Rules for Holy Living, &c.

you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it, Ver. 13.

For this thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me, 2 Cor. xii. 8.

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness, Ver. 9.

For we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, Heb. iv. 15.

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need, Ver. 16.

For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted; he is able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. ii. 18.

Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, Heb. vii. 25.

Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things, Phil. iv. 8.

The Fifth R U L E.



AFTER a convenient clothing, retire to offer God your more solemn Morning sacrifice of adoration, prayer and praise, except some business extraordinary, and of necessity, oblige a delay; but be very careful and cautious

cautious in admitting this. When retired, endeavour to fix your thoughts by reading a portion of holy Scripture, or Meditation, as in your experience you find most profitable, and as your time allows: Take care your bended knees be accompanied with an heart truly sensible of your unworthiness of so great a privilege, and of your insufficiency of your self to perform so great a duty; of the sacred presence you are in; and of the excellency of the divine Majesty you adore; that so you may the more earnestly implore his assistance, and have your Prayers so qualified as to be indeed a spiritual sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, through Jesus Christ.

A Preparatory PRAYER.

LORD, shut out of my mind all vain thoughts, with all worldly representations, that being empty of my self, and of all corporeal images, I may be filled with divine Light, and made capable of thy spiritual presence, which alone is able to give fulness of Joy and Pleasure for evermore.

Lord, accept this my Morning sacrifice, offered up in virtue of the great and only perfect sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

Let the perfect merit of that sacrifice support the weakness, and satisfy for the defects and imperfections of this my duty, which I perform in obedience to thy commands, in a sense of my own necessities, of thy Mercies, and of my intire dependence on thy Providence.

Assist me with thy Grace, that I may worship thee in Spirit and Truth, acceptably, through the Mediation of Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour.

And

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward, Mat. vi. 5.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly, Ver. 6.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the Heathens do: for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking, Ver. 7.

Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him, Ver. 8.

After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father, &c. Mat. vi. 9.

The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him, John iv. 23.

God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, Ver. 24.

General Dispositions and Qualifications for Prayer.

FIRST, you must pray with faith, in the steadfast belief of the Being of God, of his Providence, his Promises, and whatever he has revealed in his word, as matter of faith and duty.

Without faith it is impossible to please him: For he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. xi. 6.

And

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us, John v. 14.

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him; because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight, 1 John iii. 22.

And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another as he gave us commandment, Ver. 23.

I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting, 1 Tim. ii. 8.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, Jam. v. 16.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, Jam. i. 6.

And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive, Mat. xxi. 22.

All that is asked in the name of Christ; that is, by his authority, and according to his promises, in confidence of his merits, and thro' his intercession; all things tending to your Salvation absolutely, as pardon of sin, and sanctifying Grace, and temporal things conditionally, so far as shall be for God's glory, in your own and the general good: But to have a right to these promises, you must be a penitent, and an obedient believer.

2dly, You must pray with fear and reverence, with respect to God's infinite Power, perfect Holiness, Purity, and Omniscience, &c.

Let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, Heb. xii. 28.

Thou believest that there is one God, thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know,

O vain man, that saith without works is dead, James ii. 19, 20.

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, Isa. vi. 3.

Fear ye not me, saith the Lord? will ye not tremble at my presence? Jer. v. 22.

Thou, even thou art to be feared. And who may stand in thy sight, when thou art angry? Psal. lxxv. 1.

There is mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared, Psal. cxxx. 4.

3dly, Pray with humillty, in respect to your own unworthines and weakness.

Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof, &c. Mat. viii. 8.

For thus saith the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones, Isa. lvii. 15.

4thly, Pray with zeal and attention.

Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of man, Isa. xxix. 13.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance, Eph. vi. 18.

5thly, We must pray with a pure heart and clean hands, void of all sinful affections, and fully resolved against all disobedience.

The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works, Psal. cxlv. 17.

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The Lord is nigh unto them that call upon him in truth,
Ver. 17.

He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him. He will also hear their cry, and save them, Ver. 18, 19.

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is his delight, Prov. xv. 8.

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination, Ver. 9.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not bear me, Psal. lxvi. 18.

6thly, With bodily reverence.

O come let us worship, and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker, Psal. xcv. 6.

And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all, Acts xx. 36.

Times of Prayer from Scripture Precepts and Examples.

THE one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even, Numb. xxviii. 4.

And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the Lord, 1 Sam. i. 19.

To shew forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night, Psal. xcii. 2.

And Isaac went out to meditate in the field, at the even-tide, Gen. xxiv. 68.

My voice shalt thou hear betimes in the morning, O Lord: in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up, Psal. v. 3.

In the morning rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed, Mark i. 35.

Peter

Peter went up upon the house top to pray, about the sixth hour, Acts x. 9.

Evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice, Psal. lv. 17.

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his windows being opened towards Jerusalem, he kneeled down upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime, Dan. vi. 10.

Seven times a day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgment, Psal. cxix. 164.

Occasional Hours of Prayer.

I N all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths, Prov. iii. 9.

Pray that ye enter not into temptation, Luke xxii. 40.

And whatsoever ye do in word and deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him, Col iii. 17.

Pray without ceasing, 1 Theff. v. 17.

And the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven, Neh. ii. 4.

And he said unto the king, &c. Ver. 5.

And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord, and wept sore, 1 Sam. i. 10.

Of the Obligation of Private Prayer.

B U T thou when thou prayest, enter into the closet; and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, &c. Mat. vi. 6.

Of the Use of Forms of Prayer.

AND he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words, Mat. xxvi. 44.

And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c. Luke xi. 2.

Moreover, Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord, with the words of David, and of Asaph the Seer, and they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped, 2 Chron. xxix. 30.

Of the Obligation to Publick Prayer.

FOR where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them, Mat. xix. 20.

My house shall be called an house of prayer for all people, Isa. lvi. 7.

And she was a widow, which departed not from the temple; but served God with fasting and prayer night and day, Luke ii. 37.

Blow the trumpet in Sion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, Joel ii. 15.

Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, &c. Ver. 16.



Of the several Hours or Divisions of
daily Devotion.

I. *Morning Prayer.* II. *Evening Prayer.*

These stated and constant, and for no pretence to be omitted, tho' they may be shortned.

A Morning PRAYER.



LET the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be now and evermore acceptable to thee, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.

Most great and glorious Lord God, who art an eternal, infinite Spirit, perfect in Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, the fountain of Being, and of all Perfections, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things therein, and the absolute Ruler and Governor of the world; I thy poor creature, made after thy Image, in all humility, prostrate my self before thee, to adore and worship thee, and own all dependance on thee.

But, O my Father, I confess I have sinned, by withdrawing my obedience from thee, to follow the blind leadings of my depraved will and irregular appetites and passions, and the corrupt customs of a sinful world. I humbly pray thee, give me a clear sight and deep sense of the Evil and Danger of these my
doings:

doings : shew me effectually the odious nature of sin ; how sin is contrary to thy holy Nature and holy Laws ; how it defiles with stain and guilt, and exposes both Soul and Body to eternal miseries.

O Lord, I pray thee, help me to humble my self unfeignedly before thee for all my past Sins, and work in me, by thy good Spirit, a true and sincere Repentance ; such a repentance as consists in the thorough change of the Mind, Heart, and Life. Help me, O Lord, to bewail, to hate, lothe, and abandon every known Sin, and assist me with thy Grace, that I may turn to thee with all my heart ; that I may fly to thy infinite Mercy in Christ Jesus, that through his Merits, Mediation, and Intercession, I may obtain the pardon of all my Sins, of every sort and kind.

Neither is it pardon alone I ask, but the Sanctification of my nature, and of all its faculties, by thy holy Spirit.

That I may be enabled, by thy Grace, sincerely to endeavour to live soberly, righteously and godly all my days.

O give me the Spirit of Adoption, and fill my heart with love, and all child-like affections towards thee, my God, and reconciled Father in Christ.

O make me at all times to remember, that without holiness I can never come to Heaven, which is a place of holiness, into which no wicked and unreformed person can ever enter.

O Lord, I humbly pray thee, while I am in this world, guide me by thy counsel, strengthen me by thy Grace, and never leave me to my self ; leave me
not

not to the malice or wiles of evil Spirits, to the power of any Temptation, to the prevailing of any corrupt Affection or sinful Inclination.

Make me, O Lord, continually watchful over my self, over my heart, words, and ways, and make me faithful in the discharge and performance of all the particular Duties and Services thou requirest of me. And help me to trust in thee at all times; to be directed, protected, and provided for by thee, and assisted by thy Grace to persevere in the ways of Truth and Holiness, and sincere Obedience, to the end of my days.

And as thy Mercy, O Lord, is over all thy works, to that infinite Mercy I commend my fellow-creatures. Lord, they are thine, pity their Ignorance and Misery, pardon their Sins, sanctify their Natures, enlighten their Minds, that they may know, love, and obey thee, and be made capable of thy Mercy and Salvation, of thy favour and blessing: Bring in thy ancient people the *Jews*, fill up the fullness of the *Gentiles*; make them one fold under one Shepherd, Christ Jesus.

Unite and sanctify all that are called by thy holy Name: sling down those walls of Separation, which in their frowardness they have built up one against another.

Break the yokes and burst the bonds of all spiritual Tyranny and Usurpation; that they may teach no longer for doctrines the Commandments of Men.

Unite the Affections and Interests of all Professors of thy Truth; let their ends be thy Glory and the good of Mankind.

Set up thy Kingdom in the hearts of Princes, Pastors, and Rulers, that they may set up thy Kingdom in the world. How long, O Lord, holy and true, when wilt thou take to thy self thy Power and reign? When wilt thou make thy *Jerusalem* a Praise in the earth, that all Christians being purged from Error and Ignorance, may serve thee in Spirit and Truth, that thy will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

More especially bless this Church and Kingdom; make us a nation wherein dwelleth Righteousness; just, temperate, pure, lovers of Truth, abounding in Charity and good works. Bless the King, direct his counsels, protect his person, and prosper all his undertakings: make him long a blessing to the world; an instrument of thy Glory and Mercy here, and a partaker of both hereafter.

And O thou who art the Lord of the vineyard, send forth faithful Labourers into thy vineyard: endue them with Gifts and Graces suitable to so high and excellent a calling; and let thy good Spirit so direct their studies, and accompany their teachings, that they may be effectual to the saving of themselves, and those that hear them.

Bless us with faithful Counsellors, just Judges, diligent Magistrates, and an industrious, quiet, and religious Commonalty.

Deliver all that are in Affliction of mind, body, or estate; or sanctify thy Chastisement to their profit.

Bless, more especially, all that are near and dear to me by Relation, Friendship, or Obligation. Grant them

them all things needful for their Sanctification and Salvation; so enlighten their minds that they may serve thee in Spirit and in Truth. Let thy fear go before them, and thy blessing follow them: Give them a due sense of their Sins, and of thy Mercies: Make them faithful in their several callings, and shining lights in their generations: Unite our hearts, that we may live as Friends and Brethren here, and rejoice together in a blessed eternity hereafter.

Bless my Family, grant them Health of Soul and Body: keep them from Sin and Error, and grant we may all first seek thy Kingdom and the Righteousness thereof, and add unto us such temporal Blessings as seemeth thee good.

Bless all that remember me in their Prayers, or desire to be remembred in mine: discover to them the beauty and excellency of Holiness, that they may heartily choose and embrace it. Reward all that have done me Good, and pardon all that have done or wished me Evil; work in them and me all that Good that may make us acceptable in thy sight, thro' Jesus Christ.

O most merciful Lord, as I depend on thy free Bounty for the supply of all my wants; so I magnify and bless thy holy Name for all thy past and present Mercies. I thank thee for my Being, and for a nature capable of eternal felicity; for my Education, Promotion, Friends, and Favour; for any degree of Health, and Reputation; for a Mind in any measure enlightened; for any degree of Knowledge or Reason, and any opportunity and capacity of discerning, or retaining Truth.

As I am a Christian, I bless thee for my Baptism, Instruction, Confirmation, and the Comforts of thy holy table; for thy Long-suffering and Patience, which has not cast me off, nor punished me for those many grievous Sins I have committed, as I most justly have deserved; for thy restraining Grace which has with-held me from any the greatest Sins; thy exciting and assisting Grace, that has enabled me to do any the least Good; for all internal and external Comforts; for the Means of Grace and the Hope of Glory; for this night's Preservation, and for bringing me to the beginning of this day.

O that this day, and all my days, may be employed in thy Service, and to thy Glory. O that I may walk under a constant sense of thy sacred presence, adoring, praising, and depending upon thee.

Guard me with thy blessed Angels, preserve me from the power of wicked Spirits, and from a wicked world: Let thy good Spirit direct and guide me, and so influence all my actions and undertakings, that I may neither omit any opportunity of doing Good, nor fall by any temptation into any Evil.

Enlighten my understanding in the Knowledge of Truth, sanctify my affections, and bring my will to a perfect conformity to thy holy will.

Suffer me not to be ashamed or afraid to own myself thy Servant; and give me courage and wisdom to do my Duty: Make me all that thou likest, and pardon and reform whatever offends thee; that so being sanctified by thy Grace, and living in thy fear and service, I may die in thy Favour, and be admitted to partake of thy Glory, thro' the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Our

Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name, &c.

Examination before Evening Prayer.

SOME time in the Evening, as most convenient, call over the past day, going over in your mind the time since your last Examination; and observe what Sins have been committed in thought, word, or deed, what Duties omitted, &c. what Graces exercised, what Temptations resisted, what Mercies received; how God has dealt with you in his Providence, and what in you has occasioned such dealings: For tho' we must not rashly judge of the sincerity of others by God's corrections, these being no certain marks of his displeasure, and much less are temporal blessings seals of his favour: yet to the truly pious, they are both dispensed in Mercy, and therefore are to be observed and improved in the exercise of some Virtue; as Faith, Thanksgiving, Humiliation, and Resignation.

Reflect also how your time has been improved, and what temper of Mind you have been in the most part of the day. If this Examination is not discharged with seriousness and care, it will grow customary and useless; and on the other hand, if needless Scrupulosity is indulged, it will become tedious, and more superstitious than profitable: Therefore pray for a sincere Heart, and remember you are in God's Presence, who cannot be deceived.

Let God's Word be your Rule, and let Conscience have full liberty to accuse and represent your faults. Permit not your Passions to put false glosses on your
C 4 Actions,

Actions, or to excuse their own rebellion; but consider impartially how far Temptations have been yielded to; what Sin has been committed by evil desires, designs, words, or deeds: Has not your Discourse been unfavoury, proud, vain-glorious, forward, &c. your Actions ungodly, uncharitable, intemperate? Have you not lost a day by Sluggishness or Negligence? Why this rash anger and judging, and causeless suspicions? These wandering eyes, those straying thoughts, these inconsiderate words: Should I have been angry for so slight a cause? murmured against, or envied my Neighbour's prosperity? been so impatient in suffering, so backward to self-denial? Should I have so eagerly sought my Ease, and the satisfaction of my Humour, Interest, or sensitive Pleasures?

2. As to *Omissions*. Have you left nothing undone that was your Duty to do, and that you proposed to observe, and had opportunities of doing? As any part of Devotion, any act of Charity, neighbourly Kindness, necessary or useful Self-denial. Thus by a penitent Humiliation, you may retract and undo whatsoever has been done amiss, before frequent repetitions give strength to your Sins, and they become habitual: So Repentance will be more easy and effectual, and Pardon obtained thro' the Merits of Jesus Christ your Redeemer.

3. What Providences of Mercy or Judgment have you observed, and what reflections may be drawn from them, with respect to your self and others? But be sure to judge charitably of others, and more strictly of your self.

4. Examine

4. Examine if you are truly thankful to God for every Mercy, and resolved to live to his Praise. If you have done any good, or received any commendation, give God the glory, and attribute nothing to your self: depend on the aid of his Grace for perseverance, purposing to employ all the talents he gives you in his service.

It may be also of good use to reflect how you have transacted your temporal Affairs, that you may amend what has been unprosperous at the next opportunity, and not always buy your Experience too dear.

This Examination will be done in a little time, and with little trouble, if you are not *needlestly scrupulous*: and if you have kept a due watchfulness over your self in the day. Moreover, if you find it useful, and a means to make you more careful (and have time) you may note down any extraordinary Mercy received, or signal Providences; also your greater and more frequent Faults and Defects; but if you have made any Vow or Promise to God or man, I would by all means advise you to set it down, often reading over the Catalogue of such Promises, and taking care, with all convenient haste, to perform the same: But it is most adviseable not to cast a snare on your self by needless Promises; for except where God has commanded or forbid, 'tis safest and best to keep your freedom to do, or not to do, as you find most profitable, or as you are advised by prudent Instructors and the customs of the Church with which you communicate.

An Evening PRAYER.

O Almighty God and most merciful Father in Christ Jesus, I present my self before thee in all humility of Soul and Body, to acknowledge thy sovereign Authority and my dependance; to beg pardon for my Sins, and to return Thanks for thy many continued Benefits and Blessings. O Lord, with shame and sorrow I confess, that as I add days to my days, so I add sins to my sins. Even this day, how have I forgotten thee, my God, and thy holy Laws: And for want of a due awe of thy sacred Presence, and the Account I am to give of my time, and of all the talents committed to my trust, How unprofitable have I been? But alas! I have not only omitted what is Good, but committed what is Evil.

Who can tell how often he offendeth? Cleanse me, O Lord, from all my secret Faults; and keep thy servant evermore from all presumptuous Sins, that they get not the dominion over me.

Impute not to me the wandrings of my mind, nor any idle words, nor any other of the Sins or Infirmities of the day. But whatsoever I have done amiss, graciously pardon, and deal not with me after my Sins, nor reward me after my Iniquities: But mercifully look upon me, and for the Glory of thy most holy name, turn from me all those Evils which to my Sins, and to me for them, are most justly and worthily due.

Have mercy upon me after thy great Goodness, and according to the multitude of thy Mercies do
away

away my Offences: Forgive the guilt, wash away the stains, deliver me from the tyranny of Sin. O make me not an Example of thy wrath. O my God, who art greater than my heart, and knowest all things, permit me not to deceive my self by an ill-grounded Hope and partial Repentance. O assist me in a sincere endeavour to turn from every evil way, and to turn to thee with all my heart.

And now, O Lord, as I beg Mercy for my self, so for all Mankind, in the name and for the sake of the great Mediator between God and Man, Christ Jesus my Lord.

O Lord, hasten that longed for time, when all the earth shall know and obey thy holy Laws.

O let the light of thy Truth so influence the minds of all Christian People, that they may walk as children of Light, and suitable to their holy Profession.

Inspire all Kings and Governors with great Wisdom and Charity, and make them like to thee, the Lord of all, who art good unto all, and pleased in Mercy.

Endue the Pastors of thy Church with true Knowledge, Piety, and Zeal; and give all Christian People Grace to receive their Instructions with meek, humble, and obedient hearts.

Hear the daily Prayers of the Catholick Church, and let the Truth as it is in Jesus prevail, and Peace be in all her borders. Supply the Wants of all afflicted People, according to thy fatherly Mercy, and their Necessity.

I commend to thy gracious Protection and Blessing, all my Friends, and Relations; all who desire my Prayers, or pray for me. So fit us for thy Mercy in
Christ

Christ Jesus, that Death may never find us unprepared, but living or dying, we may be thine. And now, O Lord, I bless and adore thy holy name for the continued manifestation of thy Goodness this day to me, and all thy Creatures.

Blessed art thou, O Lord, who didst create the interchanges of the Day and Night, who hast delivered me from the Evils of this day, who hast not cut off my Life in the midst of my Sins, nor in this day, before night, hast made an end of me.

O Lord, I bless thee for all the good things continually received by me or mine ; particularly for being kept from wilful Sin ; for overcoming any Temptation ; for Grace and Opportunity to do any good work : Also I thank thee for any sanctified Chastisement and Affliction : O my God, as long as I live, will I magnify thee.

Thou hast granted thy Loving-kindness in the day time, and in the night season will I make my Prayer unto the God of my Life. And now, O Lord my God, as the day is vanished and gone, so doth my life vanish.

The End of the day, so of my life, is at hand : Grant, O Lord, I beseech thee, that whenever it shall come, it may be Christian, and acceptable to thee, without Sin, without Shame, and if it please thee, without grievous Pain, gathering me together with thine Elect, when thou wilt, and as thou wilt.

And grant that I may so remember the Days of Darkness, that I be not cast out into utter darkness, but prevent the Night of Death, by doing some Good ; thso at I may give a joyful Account at the
great

great and awful Tribunal of Christ Jesus. O Lord, give Rest to me that am weary, grant me wholesome Sleep, and to pass this night without fear.

Deliver me from the Terrors of the night, and from the Pestilence that walketh in darkness. Preserve me this night from all Evil. O Lord, keep my Soul.

Lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in Death. Let my sleep be a Rest, as from labour, so from sin, and free from all wicked and earthly imaginations. Guard me with thy holy Angels.

And restrain the malice of my never-sleeping, invisible Enemies: Preserve this habitation from Fire and Thieves, and all other sad accidents.

Let the wings of thy Mercy shadow me, and grant that I may be early up to praise and worship thee.

Lord, into thy hands I commend my Spirit, my Soul and Body in Christ Jesus.

O my God, trusting in thy Mercies I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest, for it is thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety.

Our Father, &c.

LOOK on your Bed as an emblem of your Grave, and dispose your self to a willing and resigned submission to God, in respect of the Time and Manner of your Death, hoping for pardon for Christ's sake, who has taken away the sting of Death, and the horror of the Grave, and rejoice that you are one day's journey nearer your Home, and the being out of the possibility of offending God by Sin or Error; repeat some proper verses of the Psalms, or other parts

parts of Scripture. And when you cannot sleep, employ your Thoughts in pious meditations and ejaculations, praying either for sick and dying Persons, for those in storms or persecutions, or for the conversion of Infidels, or for your own happy Death, &c. as your Devotion most inclines you.

Next to your daily private morning and evening Prayer, attend those in the Family or Church constantly, at least as frequently as your necessary business, and the duties of your calling will admit.

To those that have convenient Leisure, I further recommend the three following Subjects for Meditation and Prayer.

1. SET apart a quarter or half an hour for a general Intercession, particularly in times of War, or when any other publick Calamities are felt or feared, or any great Blessing desired. For the subject of your Meditation, you may take some portion of holy scripture out of the historical or prophetical Parts of the Old Testament.

An Example of this Rule.

HEAR, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken, &c. Isa. i. 2.

This is something very astonishing and wonderful, very well worth the consideration of all rational Beings, that heaven and earth, that is, the whole Creation, is summoned to be the hearers; and not only to hear, but to judge between God and his Creatures.

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The prophet does represent God thus pleading with Man: *I have nourished and bred up children, and they have rebelled against me*: and can there be any thing more amazing, than that man should forget God, and withdraw his dependance from that supreme Being to whom he owes his own Existence, who made him so noble a creature, gave him those divine faculties of Knowledge and Wisdom, Memory, Speech, and Freedom; subjected him to laws so gentle and equitable, that what was an act of Duty was also a means of Man's Happiness and Perfection; and yet superadded the promise of a future Reward, (to that his obedience) that should be both perfect and endless?

O my God, how long shall Men, who owe all to thee, rebel against thy Government, and their own Happiness? O awaken them into the consideration why and for what they are: that they hold their Being by thy good pleasure; and that it is meet they employ that Being for the ends of its Creation, since the departing from those ends must necessarily be its deprivation and destruction.

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: But Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider, Ver. 3. Those creatures that have no other guide than Sense and Instinct, yet learn to love and depend on whatever conveys Good to them: only man, who, tho' capable of governing his senses by Thought and Freedom, yet neglects to employ his faculties of reasoning, to discover the Author of his Happiness, and the supreme end of his Nature; but rather employs his thought to establish a more absolute

solute subjection under the tyranny of his Senses and Passions, than nature and instinct subjects those Creatures to, whose chief happiness is placed in the present gratification of their Senses. Shall the fiercest and most stupid Brutes be made tame and governable, by the repeated benefits of those who feed them; and shall man, who every moment possesses so many blessings by the permission and appointment of the Giver of every good Gift, forget his Benefactor; and rather than own the right of his subjection, and render a due obedience, call in question the equity of his Laws, or deny the Author of those Benefits?

O miserable incogitance! O may the continual need we have of thy mercy, preserve in us a constant awe of thy Government, that we may so consider our dependance on thee, as to pay thee, at least, a sincere, if not an unerring obedience.

Ab sinful nation! a people laden with Iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters, they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward, Ver. 4. Here is the essence and root of Sin, independency on God, or the not conforming our will to the will of that Being that made us, and has a right to govern us: but we wilfully corrupt the Rule he gives us, and so take to our selves an independent Dominion over our selves.

How justly may God take up this complaint against this church and nation? and how near a resemblance do we bear to the stubborn *Israelites*? we who, like them, have been a peculiar instance of God's indulgent mercy, laden with all sorts of Benefits.

sits. We live in the clearest light, have the greatest advantages of divine and human Learning: but how often is it employed to confound, rather than find out Truth? How often is Truth corrupted by Interest and Humour, Passion and Prejudice? And how many love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil?

O Lord, we have justly provoked thy anger, by the abuse of thy Mercy; but O forsake us not utterly: *Save, Lord, or we perish.* We have gone backward from thee, and from our own happiness; but O turn thou us again for thy Name's sake.

Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, Ver. 5.

God tries by his corrections to awaken his Creatures into a sense of their dependance upon him: for tho' he does not force the freedom of their Minds, which was to destroy that sort of creature he had made man to be; yet he uses all the means to awaken his faculties of thinking and judging, and by Corrections to convince him, that tho' he may deny God his obedience, yet he cannot escape his dominion in punishing.

Ye will revolt more and more. God punishes in order to reform and purify: when that end, thro' man's determined Obstinacy and Depravation, is not to be attained, God leaves him to himself and to those natural consequences of Evil, which, without any pre-ordination of God, follows Sin, and at last ends in the miseries of eternal Darkness; for while our correction is from God, it has an end of mercy to our selves or others; but the miseries of the Repro-

bate are the natural or necessary effects of his refusing Good and choosing Evil.

O my God, tho' we have despised thy Chastisements, as well as abused thy Mercies, yet leave us not to our selves, to the dismal consequences of our Sins and folly: try us even with fire, so thou consume our dross. Let thy rod, as well as thy staff, comfort us, that we may fear the rod and him that hath appointed it; read our sin in our punishment, and say, it was good for us that we were corrected; for tho' before we were punished we went wrong, yet now we have kept thy Commandments. O Lord, how grievous soever thy corrections may be, may they yield to us the peaceable fruits of Righteousness, and then we will rejoice.

THUS go on, making some short reflections and applications, with suitable acts of Devotion, where the text affords proper matter for it, and the sense is easy; the obscure or less affecting passages pass over with a single reading, being longer or shorter, as your Time allows; and concluding with some general Intercessions, such as your own thoughts suggest, or as you may find in this or other books.

In like manner, out of the historical parts of the Scriptures, you may draw many useful Meditations, either for imitation in what was good, or for caution in what was blameable. Nor must you think that any sin is more excusable, because some good Persons have fallen into it. Such passages being set down for warnings, and to shew the integrity of the Writer, and not for encouragement to sin, but to Repentance: and if any one, because *David* was pardoned after those

those horrid Sins he was guilty of, is tempted to think lightly of such heinous Crimes; let him reflect, besides the horror and smart of his Repentance, what terrible and most exemplary Punishments attended him, in the murder and defilement of his Children; in their rebellion and ingratitude; and then, I believe, the most belottred Sinner, who is not quite possess'd by evil Spirits, will own, that none of the false pleasure he expects from the gratification of passion and sensuality, will make amends for those dismal consequences that always do, in whole or in part, attend Sin. Indeed the whole history of the Bible is to shew the dismal consequences of withdrawing from our dependance on God: As in the fall of *Adam*, and the miseries that sin introduced, which is set out in the Plagues of *Egypt*; the forty years wandering; and many severe chastisements of the children of *Israel*: In the exalting and defending good Kings and Rulers, and in the debasing and punishing bad ones; and especially such as, by setting up Idolatry, made way for all other corruptions: Also, in order to prepare for the clearer belief of future Rewards and Punishments, to set forth how the disobeying God was both the natural and judicial cause of most of the Punishments of this Life; and on the other side, that piety was generally rewarded with signal Blessings.

A General Intercession.

AL MIGHTY God, Creator of all things, and Judge of all men, thou fountain of Being and Blessedness, extend thy Mercy and Compassion to all mankind: remember them all for good; lead them to true Faith and Repentance; be reconciled to them all in Christ Jesus, and grant unto all thy Peace and Love.

O that the Sun of righteousness might be so manifested, as to give light to those who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of Death, and teach them the way to Life and Immortality; and grant, Lord, that those who know not the law, may be a law unto themselves, their consciences accusing or excusing, according unto Right.

Call home thy once beloved People the *Jews*: take off the veil from their hearts, that they may know him of whom *Moses* and the Prophets did write, to be the *Messias* and Saviour of the World; that so both *Jew* and *Gentile* may be brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and to a participation of all the Benefits of the new Covenant.

O thou who art of purer eyes than to behold Iniquity with approbation, so manifest thy self to the world: by thy Providence, and the influences of thy Spirit, as to convince and convert from sin and error, the Unbeliever and the Ungodly: discover to their darkned reason the desperate madness of Infidelity, and the foul deformity and destructive folly of Immo-

Immorality. Free them from the Power of evil customs, and from that wretched and shameful Slavery they are under to their appetites and passions; and accept to Mercy and Pardon, in every nation, all such as fear thee, and work righteousness; for the sake of Christ Jesus the Saviour of all Men, but especially of them that believe.

Bless, O Lord, the congregation of all christian People; unite their hearts by the great Principle of divine Charity, that they may no longer bite and devour one another, lest in thy just Judgment thou givest them up to be destroyed one of another: suffer no longer Christians to usurp unjust dominion over each other, or think to serve thee by unjust Persecutions of one another. But grant, O God of truth and holiness, that the good tree may be known by its good fruits; and the perfectest Faith shine forth in the most perfect Obedience, and an inlightned Mind be accompanied with a sanctified Heart. Heal, O Lord, our causeless divisions; free us from the mistakes of Ignorance, Superstition, and Prejudice; reforming whatever is amiss in the belief or lives of Christians, that all who profess true Religion, may obey the laws of their heavenly Master; to the honour of their profession and their own eternal Happiness.

How long, O Lord, shall the idolatry and sinful lives of Christians harden the enemies of true Religion against thy Truth?

Deliver, O Lord, the western Churches from the miserable yoke of Papal Usurpation, that Idolatry, Superstition, and Cruelty, may be no longer supported by its Authority, nor the commandments of

Men enjoined as the doctrines of Christ: give light and liberty of Mind to all such devout Persons who ignorantly, and by shows of humility and will-worship, are kept in the habitations of Darkness and Delusion, and lead them by thy Word and Spirit into the straight paths of divine Truth, pardoning the errors of all such as in Sincerity worship and obey the Author of their Being, according to their degrees of Light and Knowledge.

O thou God of Mercy and Compassion, deliver, in thy good time, the once glorious Churches of the East, now under the cruel tyranny of Infidels; comfort and support them under all their sufferings; free them from their temporal servitude, and their more grievous bondage of Ignorance and Error, and restore that purity of Doctrine and holiness of Life, which was at first taught by the Apostles and followers of Christ.

Bless and protect, O Lord, all Churches and States professing and maintaining true Religion, according to thy holy word. O let not any hold the truth in unrighteousness; but so write thy law on their Hearts, that their Wills, Affections, Lives and Conversations, may be such as becometh the Christian institution.

Unite the hearts of Princes and Pastors in that great work of advancing thy kingdom in Righteousness and Holiness, that so the mountain of the Lord's House may be exalted, and all nations flow into it, blessing with the best of thy Blessings all who seek the Peace of thy *Jerusalem*; may peace be within their walls, and plenteousness within their palaces, and may all that love her prosper.

Pre-

Preserve this Church and Nation from all distress and danger: O that these Islands may be habitations of Righteousness, separated from the pollutions of the World, and abounding in the knowledge and love of God. O continue to us the wonders of thy Love and Mercy, and let thy Goodness lead us to Repentance; and when thou correctest, O let it be in measure to amend, not to destroy us; and leave us not to our selves, neither deliver us into the hands of Men, whose mercies are cruel.

O thou, who art the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, defend all Christian Princes to whom thou hast given the right of Government; bless them in the just execution of their Power and Authority; make them ever mindful of the rule and obligation of their commission, in being a terror to Evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well; make them examples of Holiness and Justice, and zealous to promote both in the World. And, O thou just Judge of all men, restrain the violence of lawless Tyrants, who abuse their power to vex and oppress the Innocent.

Bless, O Lord, with the best of thy blessings, our Sovereign King GEORGE, our Gracious Queen CAROLINE, their Royal Highnesses FREDERICK Prince of Wales, the Princess of Wales, the Duke, the Princesses, and all the Royal Family. Establish his throne in Righteousness; subdue all his Enemies; let a divine direction influence all his Resolutions, that his Counsels may be wise, and his Undertakings successful; teach Him to discern between the Righteous and the Wicked; to protect the one, and reform the other;

that under his Government, his People may lead peaceable lives in all Godliness and Honesty.

Set faithful men to be Bishops and Pastors over thy people, and endue them with all those Gifts and Graces that are needful to the successful discharge of their Ministry: Grant they may seek the Truth sincerely, and teach it diligently, with meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, not with worldly Wisdom, as men-pleasers, but in all things shewing uncorruptness, and being themselves Examples to their Flocks.

Give unto our Counsellors, the Spirit of Wisdom and thy holy Fear, that they may see in this their day the things that make for the interest of Truth, and Peace, and Holiness.

O righteous Judge of Men and Angels, direct and bless the Judges and Magistrates of this Land; inspire them with fidelity, courage, and a true discernment, that they may pronounce an upright sentence, doing nothing by partiality, not justifying the Wicked for a Reward, or taking away the righteousness of the Righteous from him; that their hands may be clean from taking Bribes, and their ears from concealing Blood; that they may deliver the Poor when he crieth, and him that hath no helper, rescuing the Oppressed from the Power of the Oppressor; that they may defend the Stranger, the Fatherless, and the Widow, having no respect of Persons, nor fearing the reproaches of Men; remembering that for all those things they themselves shall be brought into Judgment.

Fill

Fill all those who swear by thy holy Name, with a holy awe of thy Power and Justice, that so they may do it in Truth, in Righteousness, and Judgment; remembring it is the oath of God, who will not hold guiltless those who swear falsely. And, O deliver this sinful land from the Guilt of false and deceitful Oaths,

Grant, O Lord, to the religious Merchant and Seamen, prosperous Winds, and successful Voyages; preserve them from Shipwrack, from the violence of Enemies, and from all the injuries of deceitful and wicked Men; that from a sense of thy Mercies, they may by their Christian conversation, Justice and Charity, endeavour to convert the ignorant and unbelieving to the obedience of the Faith.

Bless, O Lord, the honest and industrious Husbandman, Artificer, and Labourer, with all things convenient for their support and comfort. Give them grace not to oppress or over-reach each other, and to enjoy thy Blessings with thankful and contented Hearts.

O Lord of hosts, whose power no Creature is able to resist, grant protection and victory to all such Fleets and Armies as are any where sent out to defend the Oppress'd, or succour the Innocent. O never let the standard of Truth and Justice fly before their enemies; but bless the righteous Cause with honour and success.

O thou, who willest not the death of a Sinner, but rather that he repent and live, deliver all those who are captivated by Sin or Error; and grant that all who suffer the just Punishment of their sins, may by that means be brought to Repentance,

YOU may sometimes vary the matter of prayer, or insist less or more on any part of the

penitence, taking Shame to themselves, and giving Glory to thee; and so far as may consist with the good Government of thy Creatures, fit them for temporal and eternal Mercy; and grant that all those who suffer for well-doing and righteousness sake, may rejoice that they are counted worthy not only to believe, but also to suffer for Truth and Holiness.

O thou Father of Mercies and God of all comfort, look with pity and compassion on all that are in Misery: Heal the Sick, ease those in grievous Pains, speak peace to all afflicted Minds, all who are oppressed with doubts, or fears, tempted to Despair, Self-Murder, all in prisons, in the mines or galleys, or condemned to die. Have Mercy upon all Orphans, Widows, Strangers; on all Women with child, and young Children; and all that labour under extream necessity, or great affliction.

Have mercy, O Lord, on all those who are dying; for thy Son's sake, who gave his Life a ransom for many; fit and prepare them, by Faith and Repentance, for a safe and comfortable Departure, and grant suitable Supports to their Friends and Relations.

O thou God of Grace and Truth, confirm all who stand in Grace and Truth; and pour down a bundance of thy Blessings on all such pious Persons as have undertaken any good work, that they may bring Glory to thee by doing good to Mankind; by converting the Erroneous and the Sinner; instructing the Ignorant, supporting the Poor, and Needy; and administering relief and comfort to the Miserable.

penitence,

Give

Give to all married Persons the grace of an unspotted Fidelity and endearing Concord: preserve young Persons from the snares of evil Customs, and the Delusions of ungoverned Passions.

Bless the Universities of the Land, with all Schools and Seminaries of true learning, that they may answer the end of their Institution, by promoting Virtue and true Religion.

Supply, O Lord, all who call on thee, with such assistance and supports as are suitable to their Places, Callings, Necessities, and Temptations; that Humility and Purity, Truth and Mercy, Justice and Temperance, may abound more and more.

Grant forgiveness to all my Enemies, and all Mercies suitable for them, and turn their hearts to Peace and Charity. Grant me the Grace to forgive unfeignedly, and true wisdom to overcome their evil with doing them good.

I beg Mercy and Pardon for all who have tempted me to any Sin or been tempted by me; for all who desire my Prayers, or pray for me; for those who have not leisure, and are justly hindered from the Benefits of Prayer. More especially, I commend to thy fatherly Mercy, all my Relations, Friends, and Benefactors: Deliver, O Lord, both them and me from all Evil, and give us all good things in such proportions as are convenient for us, for the sake of Christ Jesus our Lord and Advocate; in whose holy Name and Words I commend my self and all I have prayed for to God's infinite Mercy.

Our Father, &c.

YOU may sometimes vary the matter of your Intercession, or insist less or more on any part of the foregoing

going particulars, as time, or the necessity of those you pray for, requires; for it is almost endless to enumerate either all the Persons or their Necessities, which may be the subject of your Intercession.

The shortest direction is, to pray for them as for your self; which is one way of shewing you love them as your self: Consider, if you were in their State, what is most to be desired, and ask the same for them, and extend this more generally or particularly as you have Time and Affection, sometimes in one manner, sometimes in another.

All that come within your knowledge are the subjects of your Prayers: and tho' you can't relieve, you may pray for all, and that way endeavour to help the Miseries and supply the Wants of all, and do Good to all, more especially *to those who are of the household of Faith.* Do not think this a vain Repetition, and a needless soliciting Providence, who is doubtless always gracious, and needs not our importunities to shew Mercy, if we are but fit to receive it. Not to enter into disputes on this head, how far such Prayers are beneficial to those we pray for; thus far all must allow, that we are commanded to pray for all, and that it has a natural Tendency to make us pitiful and compassionate and to dispose us to help those we pray for, to our Power; it nourishes a generous and beneficent Temper, opens our hearts to our Brother; it increases good will, and cures a selfish and narrow self-love; and it will have the reward due to that Spirit of Charity it proceeds from; from that of God, who delights in mercy; and from that merciful Saviour, who has made it the badge of his Disciples, *that they love one another;*

ther; whose new commandment was Love, and whose beloved Disciple has declared, *that he who loveth not his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen*; at whose appearance the Angels sang, *Glory be to God in the Highest, and on Earth Peace, Good-will towards Men.* O happy Time, were this the employment and pleasure of Mankind. And O happy Eternity, where Truth and universal Love reigneth.

If you desire the Peace of the world, or your own, or your country's Felicity, that will induce you to make Prayers and Supplications, and to give Thanks for all Men; since there needs no other thing to make a Heaven on Earth, but the practice of universal love and obedience to God. Therefore, besides the shorter Intercessions generally used in morning and evening Prayers, I could wish that the half hour allowed for more general Intercessions, with a foregoing Meditation, might be frequently, if not daily used. Some may perhaps think I have mentioned Intercession too often, and allowed for it too great a part of their daily Devotions and Retirement: but let such reflect, that as this part of Devotion is always seasonable; so in this sad state of Dissention and Wars among Christians, and the decay of true Piety, it is highly necessary, and might be a means to cure that contracted love of our selves and of our Interest, that makes us so cool in the cause of Truth and Religion, so insensible of the miseries of the World, by reason of Sin, Ignorance and Oppression, and to put us in mind to extend a more universal Charity and good Will and relieve and alleviate the Miseries of others, suitable to our ability and circumstances. Nor would I have you

you think your self unconcern'd in the prosperity of the Publick; but consider your self as a member of that Body you pray for, and then you will be really touch'd with the Suffering, and rejoice in the Good of the whole. You know not what Benefit you may procure to others by your Prayers; however, you have deliver'd your own Soul; and exercis'd an excellent act of Charity, which shall not be unrewarded.

This will be best secur'd in the Morning, before the settling to study or worldly business, for fear the Mind should too unwillingly leave those employments.

Another proper subject for Meditation, for those who have leisure, is, Reflections on some particular Grace or Virtue, found most difficult with respect to their Temper and Circumstances. For your Meditation, choose out some portion of the New Testament, proper to the Grace and Virtue you desire to impress on your Hearts, in order to your future improvement and more perfect practice; all the history of the New Testament being of what Jesus did and taught, is full of excellent rules, both of Examples and Precepts; and almost every verse in the Gospel and Acts, as well as in the Epistles, affords matter for a long Meditation. Therefore you may either choose to read a whole Chapter, only stopping a little at each Period, to see if you understand it, or to examine your Practice by it; or else after having read it over attentively, choose out one or two passages that contain any piece of Doctrine, or recommend any Duty that you would make the subject of your Meditation.

As

As for Example: suppose you were to consider the danger of Presumption and Self-confidence, and choose for that subject St. Peter's Example; *Mat. xxvii. 31.* Our blessed Lord, with great gentleness warns his Disciples of their weakness under the approaching Temptation of owning they were his Disciples, when it was like to expose them to suffering. *Ver. 32.* St. Peter answered for himself only, and supposes that it was possible that many, nay all but only himself, might be offended or doubt of his Being the Messias; but for himself he was secure, nothing should tempt him to such an Apostasy; so that in his answer there appears both want of Humility, and of a due sense of his own Weakness, and also of Charity, of a good opinion of the sincerity of his fellow Disciples. Our Saviour, in the following Words, both foretels his fall, and reproves that by his Presumption; and I think it is not improbable, that his being so far left to his own Strength, as to be baffled by so weak a Temptation, was a just and proper Punishment for that presumptuous Self-opinion, and preferring himself above all the rest of the Disciples; but instead of being struck by his Master's Prediction and Reproof, he goes on further, presuming in his own firmness, declaring, that tho' his owning Christ should expose him to Death it self, yet he would not deny him. This is the only place in Scripture where St. Peter assumes a sort of Infallibility or assurance that he should not, or could not, deny the Faith; also a Supremacy over all the rest in this, that tho' all the rest should deny Christ, yet he would not; and yet we know by the Event, that he was the only Disciple that by his fall forfeit-

ed his Apostleship, to which he was restored by Christ after his Repentance; in which perhaps there may be something prophetic of the presumptuous and antichristian Spirit that should manifest it self in his pretended Successors.

The use you are to make of this, is; that when you foresee at a distance any Temptation, not to be too confident of your own Strength; because perhaps you feel from a present heat of Mind a strong Persuasion that you shall be able to overcome and get the Victory. And, 2^{dly}, from the sense of your own weakness to avoid running into Temptation.

This humble opinion of your self, and fear of offending God, and antipathy to what is sinful, will prevent your running into Temptation, out of a presumption of your Strength or idle Curiosity, or Vanity; for, as far as appears, some or all of these Motives seem to have been the cause of St. Peter's following Christ into the high Priest's palace. But,

3^{dly}, If the Obligations of your Place, or other relative Duties, oblige you to go in the way of the Temptation you foresee, an humble mind will direct you to beg help and direction from God, who only is able to keep you from falling, and also keep you under a constant Self-observation and Watchfulness, that you do nothing contrary to those rules of Virtue you have learnt from the christian Doctrine, and the impartial Reasonings of your own Mind; which also seems to have been omitted by St. Peter, of whom at least it is not recorded, that he at all applied to God for direction or support, no not after the warning given by his blessed Master; his mind was so little afflicted, that he felt the Cold,
and

and mixed with the Crowd to warm himself, and joined, in all probability, in the Conversation there, for his speech betrayed him, and seems quite to have forgot both himself and Master, till the cry of the Cock, and the look of Christ, awakened him into a Remembrance of both. After this, or the like manner, you may draw practicable observations from all the parts of holy Scripture, but especially the New Testament; also out of the *Proverbs*, and in some Chapters in *Ecclesiasticus*, you may find excellent Rules for your conduct as to this World, and the relative duties of it, &c.

End your Meditations with some few Aspirations or Ejaculations. As for example, from that before-mentioned.

O My God, far be it from me to say, that tho' all should fall by this or that Temptation, yet will not I. Alas! I know by woful Experience, that I have fallen and been overcome by those temptations which I have seen others vanquish. O my God, I rejoice and bless thy holy Name for the happy victories any of thy Servants have gained over Temptations; may I never tempt thy Providence by rash Presumption.

The weak and sickly do not expose themselves to those Labours and Severities that are appointed for the strong. Why then should I, who am weak, venture uncalled, to trials beyond my Strength? But, O my God, if called by thy Providence, or commanded by thy Word, trusting to thy Grace, and begging thy direction and support, I will not fear; where the Word of the Lord is, there is pow-

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er;

er; but I will remember the advice of my divine Master, Watch and pray.

Lord, may I use all the Faculties of my mind the best I can! may I fortify my self by the due use of my Understanding, Memory, and Freedom of resolution; Vouchsafe me the aids of thy Spirit, Providence, and good Angels, that are necessary to the danger I foresee; and so prepared, I fear not Victory; I can do all things thro' Christ that strengthens me.

*Another Meditation on St. Matt. Chap. xxvi.
Ver. 37, &c.*

*On the Duty of Resignation under Affliction; from which
you may for your Comfort learn,*

1. **T**HAT to feel what is really painful in any kind of suffering, is no Fault, but innocent and natural; for he who had no Sin, was sorrowful and very heavy.

2. That to give vent to our afflictions by gentle Expressions, or to seek some Comfort, by the presence of those we love, is suitable to our Nature, and no blameable Impatience, but an allowable Consolation. For our Lord, not only took with him his three most favoured Disciples, but imparts to them the greatness of his Agony, by saying, *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto Death*, ver. 38. But we must observe and learn also by this perfect Pattern, that tho' these little Refreshments are allowable, and may

may give a little abatement to the sharpness of a just Affliction and Sorrow, yet they are all to be left as insufficient without God. We must leave all outward Comforts to go further to that God who alone can save us from Sufferings, or support us under them : *He went a little further and prayed, and said, ver. 39.* The latter part of which verse shews us the utmost earnestness of an innocent Prayer, under what is greatly grievous to Nature ; *If it is possible*, that is, not absolutely possible, but such a Possibility that may consist with the divine Will : nor is this to be understood of his dying on the Cross, but only as praying for the passing of that Cup of his present inconceivable Agony. *If it is possible*, that is, if it is consistent with the Glory of God ; if it may no way offend Him, *let this Cup*, this part of my Suffering, be passed over ; wherein it is probable human Nature was put on its utmost trial : nevertheless, if according to the Perfection of the divine Will, it is best it should be so, then, *not as I will*, not as human Nature innocently craveth, *but as thou*, who art perfect *Wisdom*, willest and choolest for me. Ver. 40. *Could ye not watch one hour ? Watch and pray, &c.* Thus he gently reproveth his Disciples for being so insensible of his Sufferings : By which we may learn how little is to be expected from human help and compassion ; how soon those at ease grow weary of sharing in the sorrow of the Afflicted ; but withal, that it is our fault when we are so, and we ought to draw a Reproof, and an Admonition from the mouth of him whose perfect Meekness was to be our Example. But as the 39th verse contains an earnest Petition for

deliverance from Suffering, so ver. 42. contains an act of entire Resignation and Submission under Suffering. *O my Father, if this cup may not pass away, except I drink it, Thy Will be done.* If it may not, if thou seekest it best, I drink it in its utmost bitterness; I am ready to do it, and will no more pray for its removal: By which we may learn, that though it be allowable to ask the removal of any thing that is really grievous to innocent Nature, yet it must be with Submission; and even those Desires must be bounded, not too importunate or lasting, but turned into acts of an entire Resignation, and acquiescing in the perfect Will of God; which general Example and Rule, it is easy for you to apply to your particular Circumstances, to which you may add some general Acts of Submission in the like or following manner.

O My God, hast thou made me a free Creature, given me a Will and Liberty? I desire to use it only to choose thee for my Director and Lord.

I put my self entirely under thy dominion; O destroy in me all sinful Self-will, and work in me both to will and to do according to thy good pleasure.

I confess my own weakness, who neither know what is best for my self, nor am able to procure to my self, what I apprehend as good.

But my God, in whom I trust, is most wise to know, most powerful to effect, and most willing to do what is best for me.

Wherefore, O Lord, I pray thee to order and dispose of me, and all that belong to me, as is most pleasing to thee, and most expedient for me and them,

them. I submit to the secret will of thy Providence, as I desire to obey the revealed will of thy Precepts.

When publick Calamities or private Sufferings afflict me, I will remember that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. I will not be anxious for to-morrow, or entertain disquieting fears for what is future. I will not fear the Tyrant or the Oppressor, since I am sure that God, who is higher than the highest, regardeth; and that there are higher than they, who has promised, that all shall work together for good to them that love God, and keep his Commandments: and if the hairs of my head are numbred, the smallest circumstances of my life directed, and a sparrow falls not without permission; how can I think that Chance or Accident have any place in God's Government of the World?

No, all things are ordered by Weight and Measure, and under God's direction, or by his permission; are open to his view, to reward or punish according to his unerring Justice and abounding Mercy.

O then let me not be of the number of those who use their Liberty against that bounteous Lord who gave it; thy Will, O Lord, not mine, be done, or rather, thy Will be mine.

O my Lord, I accept thy revealed Will for my Director. I ask no new Light, nor can any contrary Rule come from the Spirit of Truth. But, O assist me in the right apprehending and applying that sacred Guide, and make those impressions of Truth so clear and strong as to enforce my obedience; for where the Word of the Lord is, there is Power.

And where no Revelation directs, or directs too obscurely for my depraved understanding, O govern

and guide me by some favourable and deciding outward Providence; some mercy to encourage me; or some preventing dispensation that may say, This is the Way, walk in it, when I turn to the right hand or the left. Yea, my God, hedge up all other Ways with Thorns, that I find not those Paths that lead to Vanity, or go out of the way that leads to Life. And let not my submission to the will of any creature, out of care to please, or fear to offend, how beloved soever, be able to tempt or terrify me from my obedience to thy most perfect Will.

And O that all creatures capable of Liberty, would choose to be governed by thy unerring Wisdom; that all that profess themselves thy Subjects, would study to know thy Will, more than the erroneous wills of sinful Men, of the Great and Powerful, who only can reward and punish, by giving or withholding the childish Toys of this lower World, not remembring thou art the Creator and Governor of all things; who alone art, and without whom nothing can be, while we poor worms busy our selves in the government of this thy World, without regarding the statutes of its Sovereign Lord, or the penalties inflicted on the rebellious and disobedient.

An Example of Meditation and Prayer out of the Epistles, 1 Cor. xiii. On the general Duties of Charity.

Read the chapter, and reflect on the excellency of this Virtue by its being set above all other Graces and Gifts.

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THE greatest eloquence and flame in Praying or Preaching is, without an inward Principle of the love of God and his Creatures, but like a dead instrument, that may delight others by being well played on, but has no delight in it self. *Ver. 1.*

The Gifts of prophecy or preaching, a Capacity to understand and unfold obscure Mysteries, a faith of Miracles, or, (*ver. 3.*) what is more astonishing, a faith of Martyrdom and Liberality, that parts with all its worldly Goods to those who want: When it is without this inward grace of Charity, it shall have no reward, be of no profit: Now since this Grace is so necessary, and so apt to be misunderstood, how shall I know when I have it in truth? The Apostle has given the following Rules; thus then let them be the rules of my Examination; and if I am sincere, I can't greatly err. *Ver. 2.*

Does not the ingratitude or injuries I meet with, weary out those proper acts of Kindness due to the Injurious? Do I not envy the Prosperous, especially those I favour not? Am I not exalted at my own Prosperity, and make a vain boast, as if it was the effect of my own Skill, or reward of my Merit, and not the gift of God? *Ver. 4.*

Do I not, by my contempt of those below me, increase the miseries of their Poverty? Do I choose to pass over some little Benefit to my self, rather than it should occasion some great and more grievous evil to my Neighbour? Am I not apt to be provoked, and to suspect ill Intentions without sufficient ground? *Ver. 5.*

Do I not rejoice in Injustice, when I may be profited by it? Do I rather rejoice in what is just and true, tho' it makes to my Damage? *Ver. 6.*

Do I bear patiently those things that are most grievous? Am I ready to put the best construction on doubtful Actions, and to believe the best I can with reason? And where truth and evidence restrains my Charity, do I at least hope better for the future? And does that Hope incline me to pray for them, and endure the present inconveniences so long as any ground of Hope remains? *Ver. 7.*

Such a Charity, and such alone, will never fail: It is both more excellent and more necessary than all other Gifts and Graces, and will be more lasting; for it will go with us into Heaven it self: Heaven cannot be without it, and in whatever breast it is perfected, Heaven is in great measure there. O my Soul, think often of the beauty of an universal Goodness, the true greatness of Forgiving, and doing good for evil; of an unaffected Humility from a true knowledge of one's self, and the great security of Constancy and Perseverance in doing good, whatever return or disappointments we meet with, by doing it for God's sake, and for the relation Mankind has to God, as made in his Image, capable of, and designed for eternal Happiness. *Ver. 8.*

Enlarge on these reflections or meditations, as your Time allows; and passing over the rest more cursorily, rest longer on that part of Charity which you find hardest to practise, or that you have occasion for: then laying your Bible before you, make it the subject of your following Prayer, or part of it, as the virtue you would most excite requires.

A PRAYER.

O Most merciful Lord, from whose free Bounty I receive my Being, and all the means and hopes of its temporal and eternal Happiness. All I can return thee, is only my humble Adorations and Thanksgivings: for thou art Lord of all, and of thine own we must bring thee: but tho' our Goodness extends not to thee so as to be profited by it, yet thou hast substituted in thy room thy Creatures, and my Fellow-servants, especially thy Saints and excellent Ones: O make me a faithful Dispenser of those talents I have received from thee.

2. If thou hast given me wisdom in thy holy Mysteries, or a ready Tongue, let not my heart be lifted up above my Brethren; but give me grace to be ready, with Humility and Meekness, to instruct the more Ignorant, and comfort the Afflicted, and to encourage all in their Christian Warfare.

3. Let not vain-glory or superstition destroy the virtue of my Alms or Sufferings; but grant me grace both to give and to forgive, to suffer or die; not to please my self or my own Will, but to do all for thy Sake, and in obedience to thy revealed Will, and Word.

4. Let no suffering weary out my patience in Forgiving; no excelling Gifts or Graces in others, tempt me to envy or lessen what I can't imitate; or provoke those who seem below me, to Grief or Anger, by the ill-natured shew of Contempt and Scorn.

O make me always sensible how unseemly it is for a
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poor Beggar, who has nothing but what he receives from thee, the Sovereign Lord of all, to insult over or disdain his fellow petitioners; but make me remember all is thine, and therefore my property in all I possess is thine, and ought only to be used for thy Service.

○ suffer me not to be impatient, if thou art pleased to take out of my Hands the talents I have so ill improved, or to speak ill of the Dispensers of thy Corrections; but teach me to grieve for their Sins, and acknowledge the Justice of their Chastisements, as they are thy Instruments, that so I may bear with gentleness, all the hard treatment I meet with, as coming from thy Fatherly hand, who loves not to grieve the children of Men, yet chastises us for our Profit; believing thou wilt deliver when it is good for me.

-5. Make me easy to forgive, and to receive the submissions of those who injure me, as I desire to be forgiven by thee. Make me inclined to hope the best; not to be wearied by Disappointments, but to persevere in endeavouring the good of all Men; that so my mind being truly inflamed with divine Love, my Charity may be as large as my capacity, and as lasting as my Being; that when the objects of Faith and Hope cease, and even those offices of Charity that arise from my own and my Neighbours infirmities shall be no more, yet then clearer Knowledge may perfect, not destroy my Love, by curing its irregularities, and directing it with more Ardour to the most excellent Being; rejoicing in the Happiness, and pleased in the Justice of every one's
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Crown; centring all my Love and Joy in thy infinite Perfections, the only Object of all my Desires; that so I may arrive at the utmost Perfection of my Nature, in loving and enjoying thee, the chief Good, to all Eternity.

YOU may use this Devotion a little before or after Dinner, or when wearied with Business or Study, either walking abroad, or in your Closter; choosing that Grace or Virtue you are oftenest defective in, or that you foresee you shall that Day have particular Occasion to practice; or if you like it better, you may join it to your Morning Devotion.

Of Thanksgiving for God's Mercies.

A *Third* Exercise of Devotion, may consist of general Thanksgivings, commemorating God's love to Mankind, your own particular Share, as it respects your spiritual or temporal Mercies: The Mercies and long-suffering of God to Man, in order to his Repentance, sending rain on the Just and Unjust, providing liberally for this mortal State, that we may be led by such Mercies to know we are depending Creatures, and ought to love and obey the Author of our Blessings, and so be capable of those far greater and eternal Felicities, and more suitable to a rational Spirit, laid up in Heaven for us: for your Meditation and Preparation to this Duty, read such parts of Scripture as represent the goodness of God, in his acts of Providence and Mercy. The Book of *Psalms* has many excellent forms of Praise;

Praise; but particularly reflect often on those best of Blessings, the being kept from Sin, overcoming Temptations, assisted in the Practice of solid Virtue, and being pardoned when you have offended.

An Example out of Psal. ciii. 1.

BLESS the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name. All my faculties and powers, my Understanding and Thought, shall be employed to know my Creator and Preserver, by contemplating what is revealed in the Works and Word of God; there to read the wonders God has done for the children of Men, the free gift of Being and Creation, Providence and Preservation: and to what end could God, infinitely happy in himself, make Man, but to be happy? And how can a creature, capable of Thought, be happy, but in subjection and dependance on a Being that is perfect? Where perfect love will cast out all Fear; for fear has Torment.

My memory shall be employed to treasure up and recount often to my self and others, the glorious marks of God's Wisdom and Goodness so plainly stamp'd on all his Works: And whoever chooses to retain God in their Minds, cannot but love, cannot but obey Him: Love necessarily attends all known Good; and where the Good is perfect, so must be the Love and the Obedience.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, Ver. 2. As much as in thee lies, forget not any

any of his Benefits, at least desire to have a grateful sense of them all.

Who forgiveth all thy iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases, Ver. 3. But, alas! How often have I forgot my duty and my true happiness, by suffering the false appearance of Good, or base fear of some transitory Evil, to possess my Mind? How often have the clouds and disorders of Passion, the attraction of what is present, the allurements of Sense, the false Reasoning, introduced to support the corrupt customs of the World, betrayed me into sin and folly? Yet thy long suffering Mercy has waited to be gracious, and has not punished me as my Iniquities have deserved.

O let me for ever celebrate that Mercy, which not only unasked gives me so much Good, but after such ungrateful Returns, continues to forgive me so much Evil; nay, is ready to heal those wounds my folly has exposed me to; to give more grace and strength, even all I need, if I will but ask it, and improve it faithfully.

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness, and tender mercy, Ver. 4. Who, when man had by Sin, whose wages is Death, lost Life and Immortality, purchased again his first designed inheritance; and that not with corruptible Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of the Son of God, who, after a Life of suffering and doing good, teaching a perfect law, and setting a perfect example, died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification; and who will appear again at the last day to judge and acquit all that believe and obey

obey the Gospel; and then pronounce that gracious Sentence, *Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord, and receive a crown, and kingdom that shall have no end, laid up in heaven for thee.*

After this, or the like manner, continue your Meditation, as time and the temper of your mind invites you, ending it with a general Thanksgiving.

A General Thanksgiving.

O P E N my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall shew forth thy Praise. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy holy Name, O thou most highest.

To tell of thy loving Kindness early in the morning and of thy Truth in the night season.

For thou, O Lord, art worthy to be praised; for thy mercy endureth for ever.

Thou art good, and doest good, and blessed be thy holy Name.

I adore and magnify thy Mercy, O Lord, for all the manifestations of thy Goodness and Power in thy works of Creation and Providence.

It was thy goodness that brought into Being so many excellent creatures, capable of perfect happiness, by the loving and enjoying thee for ever.

I bless thee for the glorious Perfections and Felicity of the holy Angels; for restoring mankind, when lost, to a capacity of Life and a happy Immortality, by the sufferings and Death, the Resurrection

rection and Intercession of Christ Jesus, the Lord of life and glory ; by saving us, not only from the Punishment, but freeing us from the Power and Dominion of Sin ; by the Promise of the holy Spirit to enlighten, sanctify, and strengthen all who ask the divine direction, and are truly willing to be guided by it.

O Lord, I will ever magnify thy long-suffering Patience to my self and fellow creatures, even when we neglected and resisted this Light and Love, still waiting to be gracious, and by thy goodness to lead us to Repentance.

I thank thee for thy preventing and assisting Grace, and for every degree of Holiness and of Christian Perfection, that any of thy servants have attained unto ; for every encrease of Knowledge, especially in divine and useful Truths.

I rejoice and bless thee, O Lord, for any Enlargement of the Christian Church, the Conversion of *Jews* or *Gentiles*, unbelievers and sinners, to the sincere Obedience of the Faith as once delivered to the Saints.

Glory be to God, for all the Success and Victories over unjust Oppressors, cruel Tyrants and Persecutors of Truth and Holiness.

And for directing and prospering just and pious Princes and Rulers ; for all the graces bestowed on them, of Justice and Mercy, of Temperance and Purity, the sober use of Power and Riches, and giving them a true and unwearied zeal of good Works.

I bless thee for fruitful seasons, temperate air ; for every degree of health, peace, and good government that is in the World.

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More especially, I bless thy holy Name, for all the Virtues and Graces bestowed on our gracious Sovereign; encrease them daily, and more and more confirm and establish him in every good Word and Work.

I thank thee, O Lord, for preserving to this my native Country, the liberty of the Gospel, and a just and legal Government, and rescuing us from the miseries of Tyranny and arbitrary Power.

For all faithful Counsellors, just Judges, and zealous Magistrates; such as will hear the cry of the Poor and Needy, and help them, and are careful to suppress Vice and encourage Holiness.

More especially, I bless thy holy Name, for all thy gifts to pious Bishops and Pastors; for the power and authority of those who have a zeal for Piety; for awakening their minds into a true sense of the Excellency and Weight of their Office; for the Example of their holy Lives; for their Illuminations, good Sermons, pious Books, and fervent Prayers.

I bless thee, O Lord, for lengthening the Lives and prospering the endeavours of any who have undertaken any good work, whereby Glory may come to thee, the fountain of all Good, and benefit to Mankind.

I rejoice in all the good Motions or Intentions raised in the hearts of pious Men or Women. O that they may go on and bring forth fruits to Perfection.

O thou, who rulest the raging of the Sea, I give thee Glory for the prosperous voyages of the Merchants and Seamen, particularly those who shew mercy unto Infidels, and by their Justice, and Mercy, and good Example, recommend the Christian Faith.

I bless thee for the preserving in the day of Battle, and delivering from Death, the devout and compassionate Soldier, who hateth violence and wrong.

I thank thee for rewarding the honest and industrious Husbandman and Artificer, with a sufficient store for Life, and comfortable Encrease.

And, O thou who feedest the young Ravens that call on thee, receive my praises for supplying the wants of the Poor and Needy, the Stranger, the Fatherless and Widow; for defending the Oppressed, instructing the Poor, supplying the defects of their Teachers, and opening their Understanding in necessary Truths.

Blessed be thy mercy for healing the Sick, easing the Pained, quieting the Minds of doubting and despairing or afflicted People; for reducing the Erroneous, confirming and strengthening the Orthodox; for supporting the Persecuted with perseverance and comfort; and for sanctifying the punishment of the Wicked to Repentance.

For the chastity of Virgins, fidelity of the married state, obedience of Children; for the liberality of the Rich; for the contentedness and submission of the Poor.

For all the Piety, Virtue, Truth, and Purity that is in the world.

Finally, for all thy spiritual and temporal Blessings to my self, Friends, Relations, Benefactors, or any others; [*Here recal any of your greater mercies, or any lately received by your self or friends*] for all who have done me good; and for them, if any, to whom I have done good; for the use of all thy present good

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Things; for thy Promises, and my Hope of enjoying future good Things; for all sanctified afflictions and corrections; for all these and all other thy Mercies, Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Might, be unto our God for ever and ever.

I will always give Thanks unto thee, my God; thy Praise shall ever be in my mouth.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be Glory and Honour for evermore. *Amen and Amen.*

THUS your Thanksgivings may be as large as your Intercessions, nay, larger; since we ought, with great Submission, to pray to God for temporal Blessings, and that very sparingly, especially for our selves; but there is no mercy so small, temporal or spiritual, but what we may praise God for it. To him we ought to return all the Glory. So that there is nothing we may pray for, that we ought not to return in Thanksgiving: But there are many things we may give thanks for when received, not fit to be prayed for; but to be left to the disposing of the wise and gracious dispenser of all Things. Whatever Mercy your self or others enjoy, or whatever Judgment or Punishment you are preserved or delivered from, whether your self, the Church, or your Country, is all matter of Praise, and Thanksgiving: Whatever Virtue you hear any excel in, or Vice overcome; whatsoever Soul is converted from sin to God, is a fit subject of spiritual Joy. When you hear any good news of the deliverance of any oppressed Christians

tians from Tyranny, Persecution, or Ignorance, forget not to make it a part of your Thanksgiving; as you ought to make it a part of your Intercessions, that if God see it good, they may be delivered, and that his kingdom may come with Power and great Glory. Enlarging more or less, as you have time, or find new matter from particular or publick Mercies, still keeping your mind well disposed, by a due sense of those great mercies of Creation, Preservation, Sanctification, Redemption, which are foundations of the purest and most lasting praises of Men and Angels to all Eternity.

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

This general Thanksgiving may be performed in the Evening, first reading a portion of holy Scripture. When you want time, it may be added to your evening Devotion; or you may join these three hours of Prayer in one, and make the Virtue, or Spiritual or Temporal Blessing you ask for your self, the principal subject of your Intercession and Thanksgiving. So that, besides the publick Prayers, your private devotion may be divided into three or five Parts, as you like best, and as you find most profitable, and freest from Interruption, with respect to your other Affairs.

All the Prayers of sinful creatures are, or ought to be offered up in the name of Christ, and in union with his meritorious Sufferings, which alone can make them acceptable. So that the commemoration of that great and all-sufficient Sacrifice, the presenting it to God to obtain his grace and acceptance,

begging his Intercession for us, and going to God thro' Jesus Christ, ought to be the qualifications of all our Prayers, and a main part of our daily Thanksgiving. And if we daily read the holy Scripture, and pray, and meditate from that pure Fountain, there can no part of Devotion pass without furnishing matter for such Reflections: pious Thoughts and Ejaculations of this sort, may also be used at Work, or in Company, without observation. In the observing these or any other Rules, have a care of turning them into formality or superstition. And after all, rest not in the frequency or length of your Devotions; trust not to your self, or to your Prayers alone, but to the blessing of God: be earnest in begging the grace and assistance of the holy Spirit.

Go out of your self, and rest not in any thing that is yours, for it is little worth: if it was good, it was God's work in you and by you; you must be indeed a *willing Instrument*, but yet you are an *Instrument* very defective, that dishonours more than adorns the work of God. The Evil is indeed your own, and thro' your own Will you fall into it. For tho' we can do no good without God, yet God is ever ready to assist us, so soon as we are truly willing to give our selves up to his Government, and to obey his Laws; and it is our own fault, not his, if we perish.

It is surely a fault, and a great hindrance to the growth of Piety, to speak slightly, and as it were, to deny the gift of Prayer. Certainly, did we more earnestly beg the spirit of Prayer, and the aid of the holy Ghost, to form us in all things to the good pleasure of God, we should pray more devoutly, and lead
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more holy and christian Lives, and grow in the love of God and of our Neighbour, to more eminent degrees of Perfection and Illumination : and it is most probable, that minds duly prepared and purified from Sin, enjoy some glances of Light from the immediate influence of the holy Spirit of God ; and if so, such prayers are surely very prevalent, since the holy Spirit cannot but make intercession according to the will of God.

The reason I recommend Meditations and Prayers thus performed, rather than reading those already composed to your hand on such subjects, is, because Words repeated without Desires, have little effect : and tho' this Practice may be less exact in the expression ; yet when it is considered, it is the heart and will that is the alone acceptable Sacrifice, we must conclude Sincerity to be much better than Eloquence in Prayer ; and it is the want of the first, makes the Prayers of many so very ineffectual. Those who have much leisure, and few worldly obligations, may, if careful of their Time, spare such a portion as is requisite for these or the like Exercises. But if Prayer, Meditation, reading the Scripture, and other good Books, be every day's Employment ; for the method (time more or less) it is not very material, so it attain its end, the forming the Mind to a christian Temper of Love, Humility, and Truth, and the life to an exact Obedience to the laws of the Gospel. Those who have less Leisure may, if they like the foregoing Rules, shorten the time, by exercising their meditations at their other work or employments : For such who use frequent short Pray-

ers, and no Meditations, ought to live in such a constant good frame of Mind, as needs no particular preparation (else Prayer will be more a formal than a spiritual Service :) but for such who are so happy as to be still in a good temper, Rules are of little use to them, they are able to be a Law and Rule to themselves: and if they are truly humble, they will use their liberty for Edification, and not indulge such neglects as tend to destroy a spiritual and rational Devotion.

For the times of Prayer, there is so much variety in most peoples Lives, by the change of place, company, and affairs, that it is not adviseable for any to tie themselves too strictly. It is good to keep a general rule, but so as on change of place, or manner of Life, to alter and accommodate it to different Circumstances. For family or church service, you must submit to your Superiors; and for the other Times of your Prayer, join or divide them, as you please. Some like long continued Prayers or Meditations; others think, when they are divided and broke shorter, they are more intent and affectionate.

Rules for Reading the Holy Scriptures.

THOSE portions of Scripture you read for meditation, and to prepare you for Prayer, let them not be long; one chapter at a time out of the Prophets, Gospels, or Epistles, may serve. If you read the holy Scripture with humility, and as you ought, you will, by God's grace, grow in the Knowledge and Love of it, and will still find something new
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in it. Let not hearing it read in Publick, make you neglect this private reading and meditation ; for this will make the other more profitable, as well as it will help your private Devotion, by furnishing matter for it.

Whatever Virtue is commanded, is to be prayed for ; and whatever Sin is forbidden, is to be prayed against : so that no body absolutely stands in need of a Prayer-Book, that has a Bible ; since a great part of holy Scripture may, with a little application of Mind, be turned into prayer ; and those Prayers are surely grounded on the best authority.

Never read the holy Scripture, without first using some short ejaculations, that you may rightly understand God's word, and practise what you do understand : such chapters in the Prophets, or elsewhere, that furnish little matter for Meditation and Prayer, or are very obscure, mark, and read at your Leisure, with the historical part ; and sometimes read a whole Epistle or Prophecy at once, that you may the better apprehend the general Scope and Design of its being writ.

Consult at your leisure, some good Commentary ; or, as you have opportunity some sober and learned Divine, if you find any doubts or dissatisfaction ; but choose carefully, and hear with Humility, and let not scruples lie to fester in your Mind, which may be dangerous, and are always uncomfortable : Do not indulge a sceptical and perpetually doubting Humour ; but be modest and content with such a Proof as the matter will bear, and is sufficient to satisfy a reasonable Inquirer, and to justify your acting on Christian Principles.

A Prayer before Reading the Holy Scriptures.

O Infinite Wisdom! tho' I am not worthy to open this Book, and unable to loose the Seals, to comprehend the depths thereof; yet I humbly beg, for the sake of Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God, who is worthy, and has by his precious Blood obtained for us Redemption from sin, and Reconciliation with God, and has promised his holy Spirit to those that ask it: for his sake, and in virtue of that promise, I beg such a degree of spiritual Light, as may produce in me saving Faith and entire Obedience; that so what was ordained unto Life, may not be, thro' my fault, the cause of Death.

O Lord, I am persuaded, that all things needful to be known or done, in order to my being happy here, and hereafter, are contained in thy holy Word.

O let not pride, self-conceit, or any other Vice, lead me into Error: pardon my weakness and unwilling Mistakes; and grant I may grow in the Knowledge and Love of Thee, my God, and thy Son Jesus Christ, my Lord; to whom with thee and the holy Spirit be Glory for ever.

Another.

O Infinite Goodness! who sentest thy Son not only to be a sacrifice for Sin, but also an Example of holy Living, and to make a clear and sufficient revelation

lation of thy will by his holy Life and Doctrine, and has caused the holy Scripture to be written by the inspiration of thy holy Spirit; let the same divine Spirit assist me in a right understanding of thy Word; at least, of all those doctrines of faith and manners necessary to Salvation.

Keep me from being led into Error thro' the weakness of a dark corrupted Nature, and sickly Understanding, or the deceiving of wicked Spirits, false Teachers, and an over-desire of useless knowledge; that so, not seeking to be wise above what is written, or to know more of thy incomprehensible Nature than mine is capable to receive, I may worship thee with deep humility and awful reverence, in a full persuasion of thy infinite Perfections, manifested by a steady endeavour to imitate thee in righteousness and true holiness; that so doing thy Will, I may know thy Doctrine, and be convinced by its excellency, that it is of God; that so by the influence of thy holy Spirit, it may produce in me a justifying Faith working by Love and Obedience, to thy Glory and my Salvation, thro' Jesus Christ.

Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal Life; and they are they which testify of me, John v. 35.

Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, &c. Mat. xxii. 29.

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so, Acts xvii. 11.

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Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the word of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein, Rev. i. 3.

Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law, Psal. cxix. 18.

Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors, &c. Ver. 24.

Whatsoever things were written afore-time, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, Rom. xv. 4.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, 1 Pet. i. 19.

As new born babes, therefore, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby, 1 Pet. ii. 2.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayst observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy ways prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success, Josh. i. 8.

If this was a duty under the Law, How much more under the Gospel, whose precepts are so much more spiritual and perfective of our Nature?

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsels of the ungodly, Psal. i. 1.

My mother and my brethren, are those which bear the word of God, and do it, Luke ix. 21.

If you know these things, happy are ye if ye do them, John xiii. 17.

THOSE who have much leisure and competent Knowledge, and can, with attention and understanding, practise longer Reflections, and mental Reasonings,
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may either ther choose a subject from some text of holy scripture, or other useful and commendable theme, and go on so long as they find it easy, and that their affections are guided by their Understanding: but if you find your thoughts will not fix, or that they run into dangerous and unfathomable searches after Things not revealed, it is better to break off your meditation, than to go beyond your depth. Spend that time rather in reading such Books as are well esteemed by wise and pious Christians; or imploy it in the consideration of the beauty of some Virtue. This is safe and can hardly lead you to error or disquiet; but to dwell long on some Speculations; such as the disputes of Predestination, of the Trinity, the union of the divine and human Nature, and the like; such obscure inquiries, beyond the plain doctrine as delivered in the Scriptures, are not proper subjects of Meditation. But whatever you choose to employ your Thoughts about, let truth be your end; in order to which, take care to maintain a Calmness and Coolness of thought, void of Prepossession and Prejudice, with a simplicity of Intention, but especially, with a spirit of Gentleness and Charity to others who differ from you; and of humility in respect of your self, who being fallible, may mistake. These are dispositions always necessary in the search of Truth, but particularly of such as are more obscure; for there it is safer believing with humility, than disputing with niceness; which is often the effect of Pride, the cause of divisions, and is an enemy to Charity. God can be known no farther than he is pleased to reveal himself: and tho' the Spirit of God is not to be limited
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to the revealed Word, yet our notions are, and must not be adhered unto, in opposition to, but in conformity with, the Word of God.

And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at even-tide, Gen. xxiv. 63.

O how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day, Psal. cxix. 97.

Mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I may meditate in thy word, Psal. xiv. 8.

Meditate upon these things, give thy self wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all, 1 Tim. iv. 15.



The Sixth R U L E.

AT leaving you Closet, and going to your temporal affairs, remember that prayer is not all that is commanded: Christ bids his Disciples, and in them all Christians, to *watch, that they enter not into Temptation*; not only when engaged, that they should not be overcome, but not fall into the Snare: reflect thus; I am now going into the World, a place full of Snares to the unwary and presumptuous; but I know also that Christ has overcome the World; that his Grace is sufficient for me to overcome it by, if I do not neglect or resist it.

A P R A Y E R.

O Lord, give me a pure mind, holy thoughts, a recollected Spirit, that I may this day, and all my days, walk in the awful apprehensions of thy sacred Presence, that thy Glory may be the end of all I do; that my Studies and my Labours, my duty to my several Relations, my Neighbours, and self, may be rendred acceptable to thee through Jesus Christ.
Amen.

General Rules for Thinking or Recollection.

1. **I**N general, before ingaging in any conversation or action of Moment, consider its lawfulness, expediency, and how it may be done with most perfection.

2. Reflect after, how it was performed: the rule of Trial is God's word, and right reason. Have a care of Prejudice and Partiality: If the action relates to God immediately, reflect if it agrees with *sincere*, not *superstitious Piety*; if to man, if it agrees with strict Justice and Charity; if to your self, reflect if it agrees with the rules of Purity and Sobriety.

3. Let your recollections be accompanied with Ejaculations for divine assistance; for what we do in our own strength, is not likely to be very prosperous, be our endeavours never so laborious.

4. If the hurry of your affairs makes this too difficult a practice, endeavour to look back once or twice in the day, to review what you have done amiss,

miss, to amend it; or at furthest, before you sleep, take a serious, tho' not too scrupulous an Examination of your self, your words, actions, and intentions. The oftner you do this, the more easy it will be, and the better you will know, and be able to judge of your self.

5. The advantages of this Recollection are many; it will keep you within your self, and in your own Power; for if you lose the government of your Passions and Affections, it will much indispose you for devotion or business, and hurt the health of your Body, as well as the quiet of your Mind. This is often occasioned by too great solicitude for worldly Things; suffering cares or diversion to enter the Heart, being too earnest in study, disputes, or conversation with Friends; giving too much way to Grief, Joy, Curiosity, Love, Dislike, Hope or Fear, or any thing that draws away the Heart too much, or clouds the understanding, as all Passions do, and so deprives the Soul of a lively sense, relish, and willing disposition to spiritual Things; or raises such a complacency and rest in the creature, as at the same time our consciences tell us, is due only to the supream Good.

This recollection will also make it more easy to foresee and avoid Temptations; it will make us more devout and charitable, more capable to order our worldly Affairs prudently; whereas by the neglect of this Exercise, you will often be in a hurry and disorder of Mind; your acts of Devotion will be full of wandering Thoughts, Fears, and Disquiets; you will be indisposed to the return of Devotion, apt
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to overlook temptations, and the opportunities of doing Good, and readily carried to offend God, or injure your Neighbour, by rash, uncharitable Words, too positive or contrary to Truth ; and in disputes to lose the Truth, by running into extreams.

6. Endeavour to suppress all extravagant Imaginations, reject them with contempt ; for to reason with some thoughts, does but fix them, and make them more troublesome : Call to mind the divine presence, who sees your most secret thoughts ; therefore endeavour that they may be approved by him, and be such as he may delight in : endeavour to draw pious Meditations from occasional subjects.

One or two Examples.

AS when you come accidentally thro' or by a Church, offer some devout aspirations, that God would hear and accept the Prayers and Praises offered in that place, and give his holy Spirit to those that ask it ; that he would bless the faithful preaching of his word, and make it effectual to the Salvation of all that hear it.

If you see a *Funeral* pass by, remember you must die ; and think *how you are prepared* to appear before the Judge of Men and Angels.

If you hear of any great Crime committed, pity and pray for the unhappy Persons, that God would give them Repentance unto Life ; and bless God that he has preserved you from that Sin, and given you a right sense of its evil and deformity.

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As you pass the street, and see many poor and mean People, think who it is that has made you to differ from them, and that you have nothing but what you have received of God's Bounty; and if you have received it, glory not in it, as if you had not received all from God.

When you see any in great Pomp and Grandeur, think how insufficient such things are to give true Happiness; how much more excellent Wisdom and Virtue are, than such accidental Advantages: They may be the lot of a fool or a wicked man, and are only ornaments when worn by those whose personal merit gives them lustre: It is an exalted and good mind, not a shining equipage, that makes men truly Great; nothing but our selves can take from us the joy of a good Conscience; and therefore that alone is necessary to our Happiness.

In like manner, as you walk or ride alone, or see or hear of extraordinary accidents, make some useful observation and application of them; it will keep out vain Thoughts, and employ and improve your Mind.

7. If your thoughts incline you to vanity or discontent, consider your Sins and Follies, to humble you; reflect on God's Mercies, and the troubles of others, better than your self, to make you thankful and contented; but if melancholy prevail much, which is a great enemy to a true judgment of your self; after prayer and submission to God under his corrections, go to some innocent business, that requires intentness of thought or exercise of Body, but not to over-charge your self, for that will but distract your

your Thoughts, and make you more uneasy, or only cure one evil by a greater; that is, a dislike of Retirement, or a rest in outward Duties.

8. Be not too solicitous for worldly things, neither reckon on the gaining of them; or if gained, that perfection or happiness is to be found in things or persons in this World; and consider what you most like in them, as uncertain and liable to be lost. It is loss of time to dwell too long on the thoughts of what is past recalling: were they Sins, repent, and consider how to amend them: were they Follies or Misfortunes, endeavour to avoid them, by making the best of the present Time, and preventing future repetitions of the same Follies.

9. Endeavour to attain a presence of Mind; think before you speak, especially in making Promises; and do not entertain your self with unprofitable fancies, or in contriving things improbable, or impossible for you to do; nor meddle, when uncalled, about the private affairs of others.

10. Lengthen not past Evils, by a vexatious thinking how you might have prevented them; nor anticipate future Sorrows, by daily fears of their approach; but endeavour, by a most strict *Resignation to God's will*, to keep your mind in a constant, calm, and silent Joy, and an outward cheerful Gravity.

Nourish the motions of God's holy Spirit in you; call to mind whose servant you are; ask your divine Master, how you may best please him? Beg his grace, to think and act uprightly, in conformity to his Doctrine and Example; learn in all things quietly to submit to the divine disposal; be thank-

ful for every Good, and ready to improve to the best every uneasy Providence you meet with; and whenever you find your conscience check you for any sin, encourage the thought, till you are convinced of the Folly of it, and have so imprinted it in your memory, that you may beg pardon for it, and grace to overcome it for the future.

The sincere, but not the scrupulous practise of Recollection, will, by God's help, assist your repentance, prevent many sins, render the practise of your duty more easy, and preserve in a great measure, a serenity of Mind, which is of great advantage to Devotion, Study, Business and Health.

A PRAYER.

O My Lord, I have long desired, and, in some measure, endeavoured, to keep a recollected frame of Mind, and a ready disposition for thy Service, and for my Duty, that no Passions might disorder my Spirit, but that it may be so still as to hear thy Voice; it is too hard for me to effect it, or if sometimes attained, long to enjoy this happy temper; yet it is not too hard for thy Grace. O Lord, what I cannot work in my self, work thou in me: my best Performances are weak and nothing worth; but confessing my own weakness, I cast my self on thy Power and Goodness, and beg thou wilt remember me, when I forget my self, and keep me from offending thee: Bring back my thoughts, direct my words, compose my affections, that I may enjoy inward Peace and Communion with thee, be ready to observe and avoid
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the snares of Sin, quicksighted to see, and disposed to do my Duty; and that I may improve all opportunities for good Works, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, who went about doing Good both for our benefit and example.

I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies, Psal. cxix. 59.

I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love, Ver. 13.

Keep thy heart with diligence; for out of it are the issues of life, Prov. iv. 23.

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false-witness, blasphemies, Mat. xix. 19.

These are the things which defile a man, &c. Ver. 20.

Rules for Study.

If your Inclinations dispose you, and your outward circumstances admit much reading, you may do well generally to observe some such Rules as these.

1. **B**EFORE you begin your Studies, offer some short Petitions for God's direction and divine illumination in the search of Truth, especially where the Truth relates to spiritual things.

2. If your time will allow it, study daily the meaning of some place of holy Scripture, that in reading you did not understand; do this, by consulting some good Expositor, or Paraphrase, such as are esteemed most impartial and practical: but if your thoughts carry you to some abstruse Speculation, not necessary

to faith and practice, be not too curious or positive, examine with Humility and Meekness, and wait for the full knowledge of such things, till your understanding shall be free from the possibility of erring, and your will of choosing amiss.

3. In all your studies, consider first their End; and if they have no useful Aim in relation to your self, your Neighbour, or your course of Life, lose not your time on them; for working with your hands, or any other useful Employment, is more commendable, than unprofitable and dangerous Studies: but such, whose particular callings are above Necessities, and can spare time from domestick Cares and Labour, may fill up their time with any of the following Studies.

First, The Study of the Holy Scriptures :

WHICH includes all the necessary parts of Divinity and Morality: this all who have capacity are obliged to, as they would escape the guilt and punishment of wilful Ignorance.

2. Next I recommend the endeavouring to know and do the duty of your particular station and calling, as head of a Family, Wife, Mother, Mistress, Friend, &c. or as a Child, Servant, Apprentice, Neighbour.

3. Then, as the best and most commendable use of leisure, you may, as your Genius leads, apply your self to the more ornamental studies, as being both improving and useful, though not of obligation; but very proper for Persons, whose condition in the
World

World gives them great command of Time, which is generally lost if not mispent, in Recreations, that inflame the Passions, and corrupt the Mind, instead of improving the understanding in Knowledge or Virtue.

What may be called useful Studies, are such as these ; *Geography, History, Philosophy, Mathematicks, Physick, Musick, and Painting.* The two last are of a different nature, but I have added them as innocent employments for the Ingenious : nor will I exclude others of the like nature ; though life is so short, and truth so hardly attained, that I confess I cannot greatly value any study, but what leads to the finding or practising Truth and Virtue, which is the happiness and perfection of our Nature.

But even this caution must be observed in all your studies, that the love and pursuit of Knowledge, take not up your heart too much, nor make you proud of your own Understanding, or despise others ; and so grow too full of your self.

To all those whose condition of life affords Time and Opportunity, Reading surely is an innocent diversion, if thus regulated, tho' it cannot perhaps be reckoned an Employment to those whose proper business it is not. For the time of Reading, every one must consider their own Affairs ; only be sure you neither neglect your Devotion to God, the business of your place, or the doing good to your Neighbour, for your studies. These Duties are to take place of all unnecessary employments.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, thro' faith that is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. iii. 15.

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust ; avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called : 1 Tim. vi. 20.

Which some professing, have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee, Ver. 21.

Beware, lest any man spoil you thro' philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, Col. ii. 8.

Neither give heed to fables, and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in faith, 1 Tim. i. 4.

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God, &c. 1 Cor. ii. 1.

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, Ver. 4.

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God, Ver. 5.

Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect : yet not the wisdom of this world, Ver. 6.

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, &c. 1 Cor. ii. 7.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, &c. Ver. 14.

And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds, Acts vii. 22.

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As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom, Dan. i. 17.

And in all manner of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers, that were in his realm, Ver. 20.

Rules for Dressing.

1. **L**ET your cloathing be with a decent Frugality, the better to enable you to clothe the Poor,

2. Let it be strictly modest, following no fashion inconsistent with those Rules.

3. Suppress all vain pride and unnecessary niceness and curiosity: if you find any Vanity of this nature, suppress such Thoughts, turn them into Praise, that God has given you a comely body, desire it may be a sanctified blessing, and not an occasion of sin in your self or others: if you are less beautiful, be not peevish, or repine; take care to secure a happy Resurrection, then you will be perfect in Body and Soul; let holy thoughts and ejaculations sanctify this and all your actions, that all may be to the Glory of God, and converted from common, to holy and religious Acts.

4. Redeem the time of Dressing, by discourse of Virtue or Business.

5. Lose not the Morning, by being too long in eating your Breakfast and Dressing.

Read the parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus* often; *Dives*, we read, was clothed in purple, &c. Yet

Lazarus was not relieved ; the needless excess devour-
ed what was needful to supply the real want of the
Poor, and left as little ability, as he had inclination,
to be charitable, *Luke xvi. 19.*

We find no mention made of *Dorcas's* Garments,
but of those she made to cloath the poor Widows,
Acts ix. 39.

A P R A Y E R.

O My God, give me grace not to consume that
on vain superfluities that is due to the necessities
of thy Creatures : Let me not stop at justice ; give
me grace to be charitable, and substract something
from my own lawful Portion, out of love to thee and
my neighbour, that so I may supply in some measure
their Wants, and cause many Thanksgivings unto thee,
thro' Jesus Christ. *Amen,*

THAT women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with
shamefacedness and sobriety ; not with broidered hair, or
gold, or pearls, or costly array : But (which becometh wo-
men professing godliness) with good works, 1 Tim ii.
9, 10. The Jews expressed that negatively, which
we express comparatively. So that the meaning of
these words, *not with broidered hair, &c.* is, that they
should more or rather study to adorn themselves like
women professing godliness than with broidered hair, &c.
God allows a difference in possessions, so he allows a
disparity in clothing ; yet sure it ought to be more laid
to heart than generally it is : for now, instead of using
these outward ornaments with Sobriety, how many
bestow that time to clothe their bodies, which they
owe

owe to the adorning of their minds ; and that money on vain superfluities, which is due, not only to the wants of the Miserable, but to the support of their Family and Children ; nay, to the just demands of their Creditors.

Not only time (that most precious treasure) and money is wasted, but the mind is filled with such vain Images, that their Devotions and Conversations are infected with them. Such sollicitousness about dressing, is more suitable to those unhappy and wretched Women, whose beauty is set to sale, (tho' at a miserable price) than to *women professing godliness, with good works*, whose end in cloathing should be cleanness and decency ; if married, the pleasing of their Husbands, joined with a prudent Regard to their age and callings. But those who adorn themselves to attract the Eyes and Admiration of the simple, lay snares for themselves as well as others ; and if they fall into them, it is but just : and such shall be answerable, not only for their Sins, but for all that they wilfully occasion in others.

For what good end can be designed by such nice adorners of their Persons ? And who that has a pure heart, would not choose rather to be neglected and overlooked, than to be the unwilling Occasion of another's sin ? Tho' no doubt, to dress with a desire to attract vain admirers, is in those who do it a sin, tho' no worse intention should be mixed with their Vanity.

A Meditation for the Beautiful.

O My God, since thou hast been pleased to keep me from Deformities, let not the Devil pollute my heart, and make me all Rottenness within; keep my Mind pure, that evil thoughts never lodge within me; that I may find a lothing, not a complacency in all unclean Imaginations or filthy Communications, and much more in all sinful and unhallowed Actions. What greater glory can I desire from my outward Comeliness, than to be a temple for thy holy Spirit? Had I yet a more curious Case, it would be too mean for so bright a jewel as a soul sanctified by Grace: I desire no other triumphs, than to be thy Servant; and if such outward advantages may make my Religion appear better, and bring greater Glory to my Maker, I rejoice in it; but, Lord, I pray thee, never let my outward comeliness be a snare, or cause of sin to my self or others. *Amen.*

For the Deformed.

THE King's daughter was all beautiful within: if I want outward beauty, I only want what is often a Snare; and if I am contented with this defect, I practise an act of Virtue that the more beautiful cannot. O my Soul, submit to this abasement, as a punishment of sin; for sin was the great Deformity that introduced all others into the World. Endeavour to be born again in Spirit; and at the Resurrection all these outward deformities, the marks of Sin,

Sin, shall be done away, and the most pure and perfect Soul shall then have the most bright and glorified Body.

WE have much to do, and much to learn, and no time to lose; do not therefore spend so precious a treasure on so poor an Improvement as adorning the Body; but redeem what time you can, to improve your Mind, or for other necessary Duties; so shall you suppress vain complacencies and a needless niceness, and remember it is a sin and shame to give hours to Dressing, and to think half an hour long in Prayer.

I beheld among the simple ones, a young man void of understanding, Prov. vii. 7.

And behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtle of heart, Ver. 10.

And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and painted her face, and tired her head, &c. 2 Kings ix. 30.

Read sometimes *Isa. iii.* from ver. 16, to 25.

Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel: 1 Pet. iii. 3.

But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price, Ver. 4.

For after this manner in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands, Ver. 5.

Rules for Business and Work.

1. **B**E G God's blessing on your work ; intend his honour, and willingly submit to his providence, in complying with the duties of your Calling.

2. Endeavour to be diligent and careful in it. Do it as perfectly as you can.

3. Yet so composedly, that no hurry or over-intenseness make you lose the command of your self ; or so disorder your Passions or Affections, as to expose you to fall by any temptation into Passion, Discontent, Covetousness, &c.

4. When you go from one employment or company to another, give a short reflection how you have discharged the last, that you may beg pardon, and amend what you do amiss ; so that nothing lying on your Thoughts of the past, you may attend the present business with a greater application, ease, and cheerfulness.

5. If your employment admits Company, and your ability allows it, let one read to you ; or if a master or mistress of children, or servants, make them repeat what they learn from the Scripture : or at leastwise mix some useful discourse with your Labour.

6. Exact no more work of any than their strength and health enables them to perform, allowing them a liberal Portion of their time for their Devotion, and teaching and encouraging them to use it.

7. If you work for another, do it with that diligence and integrity as for your self, and as in the presence of the Person you work or do business for.

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8. In all your transactions with your Neighbour, be it friend or enemy, do as you would be done to; love him as your self, and be exactly faithful in Word and Deed to all, and kind and charitable, according to your neighbour's Want and your own Ability.

And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkned unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life, Gen. iii. 17.

Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field, Ver. 18.

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, Ver. 19.

LABOUR is partly a command, and partly a punishment, that is (as all temporal corrections are), designed for our advantage: for as Labour was at first the effect of Sin, so it is now a preserver of Innocency. In heaven, (our better Paradiſe) as there will be no temptation, so neither is there Labour or Sorrow; but this life is a working State, a state of Action, of mutual Dependence and Improvement. The body is supported, the mind is instructed by Labour. Not that God cannot preserve the one, or inform the other, without our co-operation; but he has not been pleased to give any promise so to do, but a command to the contrary: in the sweat of our Face we are to eat our Bread; therefore it is Presumption, not faith, to think of altering, or not complying with this fundamental Law; and Pride, to exempt our selves from this consequence, as well as chastisement of our Disobe-

Disobedience; and they that would make this life a state of Rest and Contemplation only, (tho' in it self most perfect) ought to consider, whether they soar not above their Strength, go beyond there proper Sphere, and leave the duties of humanity, enjoined by God as man's Perfections, for the employments of separated Spirits, no where commanded, and lay themselves open to the Temptations of that subtle Spirit, who is called the Prince of the Power of the Air; For tho' our blessed Saviour overcame, when led by the Spirit into the Wilderness to be tempted; yet we have no promise, or reason to expect the divine Assistance, when we lead our selves into Temptation, and give our enemy the advantage of a helpless Solitude; it being only the prerogative of God to be independent. Shall I despise my calling, because it is mean? If it is honest and necessary, it is honourable enough: for by being so, it makes me a useful part of the Creation, and I serve to fill up the harmony, and adorn the beauty of the Whole. *Adam* dressed the garden when King of all the world. The holy women of old did not disdain the offices of Hospitality, in providing for their Guests. *Jacob* and *Joseph* served. *David* kept Sheep. *Amos* was among the Herdsmen: but above all, the blessed Saviour of the World, was the reputed son of a Carpenter, and really born of a poor (tho' holy) Virgin, destitute of what the world calls Splendor; whose outward garb procured her no better lodging than a Stable, nor her ability a costlier sacrifice than Turtle Doves and Pidgeons; and after this, shall I disdain any employment that God's providence, and my duty,

ty, makes necessary to perform? No: I will do it cheerfully, and as perfectly as I can, whatever it be; I will do it for God's sake, in a spirit of Obedience, that I may hear at the great day of Accounts that joyful sentence, *Well done, good and faithful servant, &c.*

How foolish am I, if I do not improve my Labours, in acts of Religion? I must work, I must do the duty of my calling, and it is most probable that diligence will be rewarded with Success; but besides this, if I do it to please God, if I do it as in his Presence, and in conformity to the rules of my Duty; I shall not only have the temporal reward of Success, (if best for me) but to be sure, I shall not miss that eternal reward prepared and promised to those whose aims and intentions are to please God: but tho' I give my hands to the World, I would fain keep my heart loose from it, have my affections set on things above, and not on things of the earth: tho' with *Martha* I am cumbered with many things, I would with *Mary* choose and prefer the better Part, and be still mindful of that one thing needful.

An Ejaculation.

O My Lord, let not anxious cares choke thy Word, or deaden the influences of thy Spirit: Let my end be the doing of my Duty, and not temporal Advantages only; that so no disorder of my Affections may indispose my mind for the acts of Devotion, by a Temptation to Sin, or cause my ever-
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looking Opportunities of glorifying thee my God, or doing good to my Neighbour. St. *Paul* and *Silas* sang God's praise in the prison; shall I not do it at my labours? The *Israelites* were to speak of the Law, and the things God had done for them, when they came in, and when they went out; how much more ought we to teach our Children and Servants, the excellent and more perfect rules of the Gospel; and declare the wonderful love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord?

Meditation.

AM I poor, and obliged to work, that I may eat, I submit; but beg the defects of my Knowledge may be pardoned, and all deadly ignorance removed, by the assistance of the holy Spirit, my humble reading of the holy Scripture, and diligently attending those whom God has sent to teach, and bless in his Name, I will be willing to learn, and not indulge natural ignorance out of pride (or sloth, and so make it wilful.) If I do this, I shall attain such knowledge as God (who is infinitely Good, and requires the improvement of no more talents than he gives) will accept, and he, seeing my integrity, will pardon my unwilling Mistake.

Am I rich, and has God made me able to give, and shall I be poor in Understanding only? Shall I waste that time in Care for the Body, in Vanity or Vice, that ought to be employed to adorn my Mind? It is surely required of those who are capable, and of ability, to endeavour the perfection of that most excellent part of the Creation, the Soul. It is better to

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be poor, and employed in necessary Labours, than rich, to be useless and vainly idle. It is my duty to (endeavour at least to) instruct the Ignorant, as well as relieve the wants of the Poor. The first advantage of a large fortune, is a liberal Education; should I not blush to appear cloathed with Rags, or to have my table covered with the provision of Peasants? And is it not a far greater shame to have a poor Understanding, a head unfurnished, a narrow Spirit, liable to be imposed on by every Sophister, and confident Pretender, and be for ever bound by the errors of Education, Prejudice, or misplaced Affections; or else employed in such useless Trifles, that shame a reasonable Mind to waste time in acquiring of them?

An Ejaculation.

O My God, since thou hast set my feet on high; let my heart be also lifted up, not to despise my Brother, but to glorify thee, and by higher prospects, endeavour to do my part, to guide others in the beautiful Paths of Life and Virtue.

If a poor Man would better use my talents, he better deserves them: It is not riches and honourable titles that make us truly honourable; but to be rich in Grace, and advanced in the School of Wisdom and Knowledge: the first ought to be the reward of the latter; and it is supposed, the Great have such Qualifications, otherwise they are despised in the hearts (tho' they may be honoured by the Knees) of the more obscure.

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Short

Short Examples of Examination on this Head of Business.

HOW have I done this work? Have I intended God's Glory, and observed the rules of the Gospel in relation to my Neighbour? Have I been just and charitable? Have I spoken only the plain Truth? Have I done it as well as I could? Have I done it as I would have done it, had those I did it for been present? Is not my service eye-service to my Husband, Parents, Master, Friends? &c. Have I considered the approbation of God, not the praises of Men? Have I been so diligent, so mild, so temperate, &c. as I ought? I am sorry I am so imperfect, I beg pardon of God, and if I have injured my Neighbour, I desire to repair the injury, by a free acknowledgment, begging pardon, and making a suitable satisfaction, be it to Truth, to Justice, or Charity, by word or action. Am I just in my Calling? Do I buy and sell by a just Weight and Measure? Do I do as I would be done to? Do I judge and act without prejudice and partiality to Friend or Enemy? Do I say nothing I dare not own, and defend, if charged with it? Am I just and charitable according to my Ability, and my brother's Necessities? Do I look on my self, not as a Proprietor, but a Steward? And am I faithful in my Stewardship?

How would I have another do this work, this business for me? With what Diligence, Integrity, and Affection? Even so (by the grace of God) will I endeavour to do for others.

The Soul of the sluggard desireth, and has nothing ;
but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat, Prov. xiii. 4.

For even when we were with you, this we commanded
you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat,
2 Theff. iii. 10.

For we hear that there are some which walk among
you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies,
2 Theff. iii. 11.

Now them that are such, we command, and exhort by
our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and
eat their own bread, Ver. 12.

He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly ;
he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his
hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from
bearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil :
Isa. xxxiii. 15.

He shall dwell on high : his place of defence shall be
the munitions of rocks ; bread shall be given him, his
waters shall be sure, Ver. 16.

For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wis-
dom, and knowledge, and joy, Eccles. ii. 26.

Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light
excelleth darkness, Ver. 13.

Better is a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish
king, who will no more be admonished, Eccles. iv. 13.

For out of prison he cometh to reign, whereas also he
that is born in his kingdom becometh poor, Ver. 14.

Because the preacher was wise, he still taught the peo-
ple knowledge ; the preacher sought to find out acceptable
words, and that which was written was upright, even
words of truth, Eccles. xii. 9.

Rules in Eating.

1. **B**EGIN and end with asking God's blessing.
2. Eat and drink no more for quantity, than will admit a speedy return to study or business, without Trouble.
3. For quality, of what your Experience finds most healthful, and of other Things very little, if any.
4. Provide a plain plenty, according to your Ability; but affect not the vanity of needless Feastings, or expensive Curiosities.
5. Indulge not extravagant mirth, or light and foolish talking; but an innocent and useful Cheerfulness, is commendable and healthful.
6. Do not, if you are in health, indulge your appetite in all its Cravings; but use self-denial, till you have got an entire victory, so as to be able to forbear in the choice or measure of Meats and Drinks without uneasiness; and to prefer Health, and a clear Mind, before the pleasures of Sense. Endeavour to overcome any niceness, or antipathies in Eating, that you may be indifferent to all Meats.
7. Judge honestly for your self, and call not that necessary that is not so; but prescribe not to others; do not condemn or judge thy Brother for these things.

The end of eating is Health and Strength, to serve God and our Neighbour; but for the measure, it cannot be assigned, but must be left to every one's own Observation, who are not to be judged, if they exceed not the rules of Temperance. If all we eat

or

or drink is to be sanctified by Prayer, then surely we ought to be careful to perform this duty with Reverence and Attention, for which we have both precepts, and the frequent example of Christ our law-giver. It argues a faulty Bashfulness, when we omit this in compliance to irreligious Persons and vain Customs.

An Ejaculation before Meat, but not intended for a Grace.

O My Lord, it is of thy bounty I am supplied; and shall I not thank thee for thy own Gifts? It is thy blessing and thy providence that makes them means of Health, and shall I not ask this Blessing? Shall I blush to own my great Benefactor, and my dependance on him? Lord, grant that whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, it may be to the Glory of thee my God.

Another.

O Lord, thou art the author and preserver of my Being, pardon my sins which make me unworthy of the least of thy Mercies: purify my nature; bless these thy gifts to my Health, and my Health to thy Glory. I commend to thy infinite mercy the wants of all my Fellow-creatures; supply them graciously for thy Son's sake.

Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be over-charged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the

cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares,
Luke xxi. 34.

O Lord, give me such a recollection of Mind, that I may take such heed to my self, as never to gratify my senses by excess. Let not my table be a snare to me; let my appetites be governed by reason and religion, that as my abstinence may be to serve the ends of Devotion and Virtue, so my meat and drink may serve that of Health, and be made subservient to its Rules; and that Health may be employed to thy Glory and in the duties of my calling, and doing good.

Blessed art thou, O land, when thy princes eat in due season for strength, and not for drunkenness, Ecclesi. x. 17,

THE necessity of Meat and Drink is a constant Monitor of the weak and decaying state of our bodies, and a reason of Humiliation: and shall we turn it to an occasion of Riot and Pride, and, by excess, make what was given to maintain Life, the cause of Sicknes and Death? Is not this a more deliberate, and less excusable self-murder, than what is committed by many of those poor unhappy Persons, to whom we refuse christian Burial? While the others, indulged by their Friends and themselves, are little sensible of their Guilt. Are not those persons who procure long Sicknes by their Excess, or irregular diet, chargeable with the loss of that time, and the same performance of those Duties, which their weakness makes unavoidable, as if they were wilful Neg-

Neglects? since the cause at first was wilful. The contrary mistake (though it has a better Original) is also blameable; that is, when by our Fasting, or other Mortification, we destroy the end to which it should serve; the better doing our duty to God and Man.

Read and meditate on *Luke* xvi. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23^d Verses; and consider, it is not enough to have your diet conformable to rules of Health, at least, not destructive of it; for that may be with a fault in its Excess. Charity is to be considered also in the wants of the miserable. I am not obliged to destroy my Health to feed the Poor, or to deny myself what I may reasonably suppose necessary for it; but I ought to be content with plainer Food, if the other incapacitates me to relieve the necessities of my Neighbour. My hospitality to my richer friends, ought not to rob the poor of their Portion. Friendship, and my own ability, and the quality and number of the Persons to be entertained, ought to be allowed for and considered, and the provisions proportioned by the rules of Christian Prudence and Charity; but no intention of Ostentation, excelling others, or ill-designed Popularity, must be indulged; for then it is no longer Hospitality, but Pride, and the thing forbid by our Saviour, and may be accounted the revelling and banqueting condemned by the Apostles.

An Ejaculation.

O My God, can I take pleasure in devouring the Poor, by faring sumptuously every day; and sacrificing to Vanity, Pride, Ostentation, or needless Delicacy, and false pretensions of Health, what would not only support the body, but exhilarate the broken spirit of my Brother? Shall I give, not only my money and my labour, but my Thoughts and Heart to gain a false reputation of Hospitality, and lay up no Treasures, make no friends of the mammon of Unrighteousness? Can I read this parable without fearing *Dives's* Punishments? yet *Dives* would have warned his Brethren. O my Soul, take warning, else thou art more unexcusable than *Dives*, and hast less compassion than he is here represented to have; but so share thy good things with thy Brother *Lazarus*, that thou mayst with him partake of the good things of the World to come; thro' the Merit of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all Men,

Lastly, Do not eat often, or out of the common hours, except sickness obliges; for it looks like the indulging Irregularity, and is sometimes affectation, when necessity is pretended.

Thanks after Meat.

O My God, make me, and all thine, sensible of, and thankful for, all thy Mercies; especially for a capacity to know and to love thee: sanctify and
save

save those whom thou hast made after thy own Image: unite all the members of Christ in Truth and Holiness, and bring us all to thy kingdom of Glory for Christ's sake.

I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection,
1 Cor. ix. 27.

Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her, and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy, Ezek. xvi. 49.

Be not amongst wine-bibbers; amongst riotous eaters of flesh, Prov. xxiii. 20.

For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags, Prov. xxiii. 21.

Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, Rom. xiii. 13.

Rules of Conversation.

1. **B**EFORE you enter on any foreseen conversation, beg God's blessing and direction in some short Ejaculation; and during the time you are in Company, observe how you keep to your Duty, and mix with your conversation pious Thoughts and Desires, to do or receive Good; and consider how you may be most useful to those you converse with, to encourage each other in the search of Truth, increase of Knowledge, or practice of some Duty and Christian Virtue.

Let

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers, Eph. iv. 29.

The use of speech was designed me to glorify God, and to do or receive good from my Fellow-creatures: Consider, have I now no opportunities of either of these? Can I say, or incline others to say nothing to the use of edifying, to the encrease or exercise of some Virtue, or knowledge of our Duty, or magnifying the goodness of God? If this is not seasonable, Can I no ways promote the interest of Truth, or detect Error; no ways promote the health, or innocent cheerfulness, the profit and lawful temporal interest of my Neighbour? Is it a season to advise or reprove? But if you are so unfortunate as to be in a conversation, where neither things useful nor innocent will be accepted, keep silence, and avoid at another time such Company (if your duty or business make not the contrary necessary;) however bear not a part in corrupt and vain Conversation, that is forbid, and will be a sin and snare to the Unwary,

An Ejaculation.

O Lord, thou didst once promise to give a tongue and wisdom, which all the adversaries of Truth should not be able to gainsay: I am unworthy to receive that Promise in the first fullness; yet so far as it is necessary for thy Glory and the Good of Souls, I humbly beg an interest in it; at least such spiritual Directions, presence of Mind, Wisdom, and Courage in speaking, as neither

ther Truth nor Virtue may ever suffer thro' my Ignorance or Weakness; but let my speech be with grace, that I may know how to answer every one that asketh me a reason of the Hope that is in me, with Meekness and Fear. And tho' I am slow of speech, and of an unready tongue, yet open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy Praise.

2. Be strict to truth and sincerity in Speaking, not only in the simplicity of your Words, but to the understanding of your Hearer; for it is easy to deceive the Person you speak to, and yet speak truly.

A righteous man hateth lying, but a wicked man is loathsome and cometh to shame, Prov. xiii. 5.

Lying is endless: one lye generally makes others equally necessary to support the first; it is a mark of the silliest Cowardice, fearing man, a little suffering or temporal inconveniency, more than God, your own Conscience, Sin, and eternal Miseries: it is the greatest Folly; for when known, it will make you contemned, and your conversation scorned; it makes Truth it self not regarded from you, and converts the use of Speech into a sort of Curse and Punishment. It were, in many respects, better to be dumb, than to use Words only to deceive and profane sacred Truth. Consider often, how you your self would like to be deceived by others; contemplate the beauty of simple Truth, and the ease of a clear integrity, that fears no malicious Observer: endeavour to do nothing that needs a lye to conceal it, nor to say any thing you either dare not, or will not justify.

Where-

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour; for we are members one of another, Eph. iv. 25.

Since all mankind are members one of another, and came from one common Stock, How unnatural is it to deceive one another? Just as if the eyes should endeavour to cheat the ears, and the members should combine against each other to destroy the Body in which they subsisted: want of Integrity is the great cause of many of those miserable contentions that are in the World; therefore truth and peace are joined together, and falshood is both evil in it self, and produces many other Evils.

7 Avoid compliments and all degrees of Flattery, all artificial and deceitful Insinuations, or false Representations, to mislead the understanding of your Hearer. You can hardly do a greater injury than to rob your neighbour of Truth, and by your wit, impose on his credulity or ignorance; it is using your eyes to lead the Blind into a ditch, which is very inhuman.

Therefore to repeat my former Rule, (and truly it is so necessary, and yet so lamely practised, that it needs repeating) take care that not only your words be true, but that they be so plain and sincere, that your meaning may be rightly understood, that so far as you inform, you may inform rightly, and where the Truth cannot bear to be understood, or may occasion a greater evil than Ignorance, (for no consideration can make it a duty to propagate or support Error;) in those cases practise silence; for surely Equivocation, mental Reservation, and the like Arts, are greatly below the simplicity of a Christian,

tian, and the courage and dignity of a reasonable Being.

An Ejaculation.

O Thou God of Truth, who hast excluded out of the new Jerusalem every one that loveth or maketh a Lye; fix in my heart a sacred love and reverence to this glorious Perfection, and never suffer me wilfully to sin against the Truth, whatever sufferings or dangers I may be exposed to: let me not think thou needest the service of a Lye, any more than thou desirest we should rob for a Burnt-offering.

O Lord, keep my tongue from evil, and my lips from speaking guile; (Psal. xxxiv. 13.) that I may see days of peace and happiness here, and live in thy Jerusalem for evermore.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, (Psal. xiv. 3.) even a sacred one, the consideration of thy Presence, and the account I must one day give of false, flattering, and idle Words, and let it keep the door of my lips shut to all evil communications.

A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin, Prov. xxvi. 28.

A man that flattereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feet, Prov. xxix. 5.

Lord, Who shall dwell on thy holy hill? Psal. xv. 1.

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth from his heart, Ver. 2.

Be affable to your Inferiors, not imposing in your Words, or despising them, if less instructed. Use

no scornful nor slighting Expressions, nor expose (except to some necessary and commendable End, as to convince them, or warn others) their errors and mistakes.

For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? 1 Cor. iv. 7.

Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves, Phil. ii. 3.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith, Rom. xii. 3.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, Ver. 6.

Be kindly affectioned one to another; with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another, Ver. 10.

Condescend to men of low estate; be not wise in your own conceit, Ver. 16.

Be respectful to your Superiors, especially to those who are esteemed for their Virtue, Prudence, Learning, &c. Also to your spiritual and temporal Rulers; it keeps up their Authority; contempt takes away their Power of doing good.

Curse not the king, no not in thy thought, Eccl. x. 20.

Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people, Exod. xxii. 28.

Part. I. *Rules for Holy Living, &c.* 111

Submit your selves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, 1 Pet. ii. 13.

Or unto governors, Ver. 14.

He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me, Luke x. 16.

We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, 1 Theff. v. 12.

And to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake, Ver. 13.

Some further Rules for Conversation.

Conform your discourse to the circumstances and capacities of the Persons you talk with, that you may learn of them, or they of you, as most capable: consider also their defects, and endeavour to guard them against the side of natural Inclination, whatever it be, by a gentle recommending the opposite Virtue, considering still what good or hurt your Words may do; for even truths sometimes are uncharitable and hurtful.

Do not expose the faults of any to their Enemies: as of Ministers, before the Profane, or other opposers of their Office or Doctrine. Indeed we ought to avoid speaking or whispering the faults of any, except where Justice or Charity make it necessary, for Admonition or Punishment, or to save the innocent from Infection, by avoiding the Guilty. Be as careful of your neighbour's Reputation, as you desire he should be of yours, remembering the golden Rule;

Rule, of doing as you would be done by; watch against a severe Spirit, that interprets all to the worst, and judges rashly. Let Charity, and the sense of your own Faults, teach you to speak and hope the best. If you have not been guilty of the same Fault you so hardly censure in another, Have you not been of others as great? And if not, it is better to exercise thankfulness for your self, and pity for your neighbour, than a proud Contempt and rash Judgment. Reprove with mildness, and generally in secret; forbear if you find your passion not governable, and manage it so, that the party may perceive it is love and friendship to his Person, and dislike of his Faults only, that makes you speak.

He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction, but he that refuseth reproof erreth, Prov. x. 17.

He that bideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth slander, is a fool, Ver. 18.

Concealed anger may turn to malice, especially if covered with the false pretence of Friendship: If the offence is too great to be past over and forgot, speak it out plainly, that it may be amended and forgiven, or the person forgiven, but avoided.

Advise others with integrity and plainness: put your self in their Place and Circumstances, and direct them as you would do your self, avoiding all aims of self-interest, or other sinister ends or designs.

Be wary in speaking of your Enemies, or of any party you favour not: for envy and malice slide in unperceived, and always represent things hardly, if not untruly.

Abhor

Abhor to hear or to speak, whatever tends to the least Immodesty.

Jest not with sacred things, nor recite such Jest again, if heard; but use your mind to a serious Reverence in hearing or using the name of God, and in speaking of the holy Scriptures.

Avoid self-commendations, and the encouraging Praises and Flatteries, either by praising or dispraising your self.

In arguing or disputing, be it of sacred or civil matters, endeavour to keep down Resentments, Passion, and Prejudice: seek truth more than victory; do not oppose it wilfully, but be willing to yield to it. If you see it on your adversaries side, acknowledge it ingenuously, and submit cheerfully, using in all things a strict Sincerity, and believe it a greater victory to conquer your self than your Adversary.

On the other side, avoid Credulity, or thinking what you can't answer is unanswerable; but seek satisfaction from those who are esteemed most learned and knowing, before you yield to the reasons of an Adversary, whose only advantage is perhaps a greater share of Wit or Subtily to set off Error.

Be sure to preserve a spirit of Meekness, Charity, and Modesty; for to lose Charity is to transgress a certain Duty, to defend, perhaps, but an uncertain speculation. If Passion enter the list, dismiss the dispute to a calmer season; be patient of ill Usage, and prepared to endure Sophistry and Disingenuity, which generally go along with Error. If you can't undergo this, you are not fit to argue.

Bear no ill-will to any, nor let noise and words blind you. Review and consider both your own
I and

and your Adversary's arguments, that what heat or passion mistook, Reason and Recollection may rectify. If you get the better on Truth's side, give God the glory: do not insult or boast: but if your Adversary get the seeming advantage, by Cunning or Boldness, bear his triumphs patiently; be content with truth, and bless God, that as you are not robbed of that by false appearances, so you have no less betrayed it by Cowardice. Pray for Grace to persevere, how dangerous soever its profession may prove. As much as you well can, avoid all personal Reflections, and retain no malice, nor break Friendship for differing in Opinions, where nature or duty obliges to a Correspondence.

These are the things that ye shall do, Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates, Zech. viii. 16.

Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour, and love no false oath, &c. Ver. 17.

Let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouth; and grieve not the holy spirit of God, Eph. iv. 29, 30.

Corrupt conversation is here said to grieve the holy Spirit; and experience will soon convince any observing person of this Truth; that vain and worldly conversation greatly indisposes for Prayer, Meditation, &c. It cools, if not decays our love of God, and indisposes for divine Communications: for to have clear conceptions of spiritual Objects, it is necessary that the mind be empty of worldly Representations, and the affections be calm and disengaged

ingaged, that so neither the affections nor will may resist the Understanding, in the search of Truth, or submission to divine Revelation: whereas hurry and confusion of Thoughts, disorder the Passions and Affections, and they the Understanding; so the Will executes weakly, and the mind is as it were wrapped in Clouds, which interpose between it and heavenly things, makes the distance so great, and the prospect so minute and uncertain, that they lose their force thro' our want of Faith and Vision, and so remain without substance, or evidence sufficient to excite our Obedience.

A PRAYER.

O Lord, let me not, for the delusive pleasure of vain Mirth and infectious Wit, that corrupts more than profits, exchange that solid Joy and Delight, which springs from contemplation and the influences of thy Spirit. Punish not, O Lord, my folly by forsaking me, but pity my weakness, that is too apt to be betrayed by sensible Objects, and so imbitter to me all such vanities, that I may never be pleased with any thing that offends thee, or that will cloud and deprive me of thy sacred Presence and divine Communications, for the sake of Jesus Christ my Lord.

*If any man among you seem to be religious, and brid-
leth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's
religion is vain, Jam. i. 26.*

True religion cannot consist with an unbridled tongue; it will necessarily occasion so many Sins in our

selves and others, that the conscience must be very ill informed and unobserving, that leaves unguarded so weak a Part, that seldom wants opportunities, and has so many temptations to offend.

O my God, let me not deceive my self with a ritual Religion, or a warm Devotion, that lies only in the fancy and affections; which may indeed deceive my own Heart, but cannot deceive thee. Give me, O Lord, that internal Grace that sanctifies the heart, renews thy image there, and manifests it self by Words and Actions, suitable to my profession as a Christian, and to the end of my Being, thy Glory, and the doing Good.

Shun too great moroseness of Humour, and avoid peremptory affirmations and positiveness; speak not purely for speaking sake, but let your words be useful, at least innocently cheerful, and keep your heart in a good frame, and your passions composed, and in your power, that you may judge rightly.

Consider in hearing and speaking, and let not your judgment be the effect of Chance: be not astonished at the strange Opinions of others, but allow for Education, Prejudice, Interest, want of Means or Capacity.

Be not uneasy at the rude or bitter speeches of others; learn to reprove, and endure to be reprov'd: It is a dangerous thing to converse much with those that always pretend to yield to you, applaud and flatter you, right or wrong.

Avoid the company of the irreclaimably Vicious, and Impertinent; the one loses time, and the other is not safe.

Endea-

Endeavour to converse with such as are wise, honest, and pious ; for such conversation will inform and elevate the Soul, as its contrary debases it.

Prepare for disappointments in Business, &c. that so you may be better able to encounter Difficulties, and act under them unmoved ; surprise often indisposes for Action.

Lastly, Review your words, that if in disputes, thro' Rashness or Inconsideration you have transgressed Truth, or committed other Faults, you may rectify it ; beg pardon of God, and make satisfaction to your Neighbour, if injured.

The duties and faults of the Tongue, are too many to be inserted ; often read books on that Subject ; it is an instrument always ready, therefore carefully to be guarded, that you fall not into a vain, but especially a vicious Conversation.

Be careful to be sincere and charitable, designing the glory of God and the good of your Neighbour, and you cannot greatly err ; beg God's grace, and often consider if you lose not the government of your self. Thus by short unobserved Silences, recollect and compose your self, mending what you observe amiss,

I said, I will take heed unto my ways, that I offend not with my tongue, Psal. xxxix. 1,

I am utterly purposed that my mouth shall not offend, Psal. xvii. 3.

Who so keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles, Prov, i, 23.

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man, Col. iv. 6.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice, Eph. iv. 31.

And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you, Ver. 32.

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you ; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient ; but rather giving of thanks, Chap. v. 3.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, Exod. xx. 7.

And the servant of the Lord must not strive ; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 2 Tim. ii. 24.

In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves ; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, Ver. 25.

Rules for Silence.

SILENCE is often the Preserver of innocency ; Speaking much may be a fault in many respects.

1. In unprofitable arguings ; where the Truth disputed for is not worth contention, at least if it cannot be done calmly : answers increase opposition in some who are not of teachable Tempers, but are irritated by dispute, and easier gained by greater Complacence.

2. Silence

2. Silence is good when reprov'd, avoiding earnestness, in self-justification; except when Silence brings a scandal on your Profession, injures Truth or Charity, or breaks Friendship, and leads your Neighbour into error.

3. When others faults are discoursing of, Silence is often safest, if an excuse is not consistent with Truth, or with your belief of the fact related.

4. To all vain, frothy conversation, where reproof is not convenient, shew your dislike, at least by Silence. In these and the like cases, Silence is safest; and often its defect is a Fault; it is also a great means (joined with recollection and holy Thoughts) to keep up a compos'd frame of Mind. But Silence may also be a fault, when you ought to reprove or advise; or if it proceed from being afraid or ashamed to own God and your Duty, or for want of delight to speak of spiritual things, or out of a morose fullness of Temper, Pride, or Contempt of your company.

The End of the First Part,





A
M E T H O D
O F
D E V O T I O N, &c.

P A R T II.

Some Rules relating to the Devotions
on the Lord's-day, and other Days
of extraordinary Retirement.

C H A P. I.

Of Days of Humiliation and Fasting.

First,



LL days appointed by publick Authority, are to be imployed conformable to the intention and end of those Appointments ; that is, in frequenting the publick Assemblies, and joining in the publick Service, and hearing the Sermons, and enlarging your own pri-

private Devotions, which will be most properly employed ;

1. By confessing and lamenting your own Sins.

2. The national Sins, which together have contributed to bring down those publick Calamities which are either felt or feared, and are both the just and natural punishment of Impiety and Immorality.

Secondly, In deprecating God's judgments, especially any judgment that more immediately threatens, or is gone out against that Church or Nation you pray for : if under Persecution, tyrannical Government, War at home or abroad, Façtions, Dissensions ; or if afflicted by Pestilence or epidemical Diseases, Famine, Scarcity of Bread, Storms, and Tempests, &c. Or,

Thirdly, In imploring God's blessing on some lawful Undertaking ; as for success in war against our Enemies ; for the life and prosperity of good Princes and Rulers, civil or sacred ; or for directing the publick counsels with relation to the Church or State, that true religion and virtue may be advanced and supported ; or for fruitful and healthful Seasons, &c.

But all your prayers for averting any temporal Evil, or obtaining any worldly Prosperity, must be with an entire submission to God, having as your chief end the manifestation of his Glory in the increase of Holiness, obedience to his Laws, and enlargement and union of that only true Church, whose members are by the divine Spirit united by faith to Christ their Head, 1 *John* v. 2, 4, and iii. 14. and consequently pay a sincere and universal obedience to his Laws and Institutions, as to their King and
Law-

Law-giver ; and live in Charity and brotherly Love one with another, as their Lord commanded them,

Fourthly, Consider what your place and calling requires you to do, in order to assist the Publick under the present circumstances : as first, what degrees of Liberality are suitable to your Ability and Station : what becomes you, as a Christian, as a lover of your Country, as a promoter of every good Work.

Can you contribute any thing towards reforming the Irregular, instructing the Ignorant and Erroneous, comforting the Afflicted, vindicating the Oppressed, reconciling Quarrels, making Peace ; and in short, promoting Justice, Mercy, and Truth, among Men ? For these are proper employments and more edifying duties for days of Humiliation, than only the confession of past Sins can be ; for without bringing forth fruits meet for Repentance, the other will not be accepted. Reformation was the repentance that *John* the Baptist preached ; and he that was greater than *John*, teacheth, that it is *not saying, Lord, Lord, but the doing the will of our heavenly Father*, that must give a title to a place in his Kingdom.

If you accustom your self to consider your Estate, your Power and Authority, as a trust, and that the government and laws, by whose protection you enjoy those Advantages, has a right to appropriate what share is legally judged needful to secure to you the possession of the rest, with all the other comforts of Life which so much depend on a good Administration, and to defray whose just expences it is so necessary : I say, if you consider your self but as a part of the whole, in whose well or ill Being, your own

is certainly involved, you would pay what money or service is required with the same Contentedness and Fidelity, as you do for those instruments that manure your Land, or exercise your Trade, or to the Labourers who assist you in it ; and they are unworthy to live under a free and legal Government, especially one so excellent as that of England, who think any thing, even life it self, too much to part with for its Support.

If it is a time of Scarcity, or reigning Sickness among the poorer sort, or any other like calamity that wants Relief, you are to consider how much you can retrench from your otherwise allowable Expence, to supply the greater Necessity of others ; what care can be taken of the souls and bodies of the Sick, of Widows and Orphans ; and how the publick calamities may be best improved to spiritual Advantages.

If your country is in the unhappy state of Party and Divisions, consider how far you can, by your Prudence and Charity, contribute to put out those destructive Flames ; at least join with the Honest and Virtuous, in what relates to the support of Christian Virtue and true Morality, which all sides pretend to agree in.

What pains are taken to make Hypocrisy consist in some obscure and controverted notions and forms of Worship ? While the plain and certain mark of Hypocrisy is little regarded, the calling our selves Christ's Disciples, and having so little Regard to those laws which every one owns to be plain and clear, and our necessary duties ; in particular to that certainest mark of Discipleship, our *Love to one another.*

O my Lord, keep me from that worst Hypocrisy of neglecting Mercy, Justice, and the love of God, and whatever other plain Duty I know, out of a pretended Zeal in observing, or curiosity in searching after what is obscure and hard to be known, and is of little use to the purifying my Mind, and regulating my Actions when known.

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul. Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Isa. lviii. 5.

Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Ver. 6.

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy self from thy own flesh? Ver. 7.

Then shall thy light be as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord be thy reward, Isa. lviii. 8.

Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am; if thou take away from thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity, Ver. 9.

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day, Ver. 10.

And

And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and thou shalt be as a watered garden, and like a spring of waters, whose waters fail not, Ver. 11.

The whole Chapter is excellent, and fit for our Meditations on such solemn days.

When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; 1 Kings viii. 35.

If there be in the land famine; if there be pestilence, whatsoever sickness there be; Ver. 37.

If thy people go forth to battle against their enemy: Ver. 44.

Then hear thou in heaven their prayers and their supplication, and maintain their cause, Ver. 45.

Whatever prayer and supplication be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, &c. Ver. 38.

Then hear thou in heaven and forgive, and do and give to every man according to his ways; for thou, even thou only knowest the hearts of all the children of men, Ver. 39.

So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, Jon. iii. 5.

And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not, Ver. 10.

And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast, 2 Chron. xx. 3.

And Judah gathered themselves together to ask help of the Lord, Ver. 4.

Then I proclaimed a fast, that we might afflict our selves before our God, and seek of him a right way, Ezra viii. 2.

So we fasted, and besought our God for this, and he was entreated of us, Ver. 23.

When

When they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to God, Acts xiv. 23.

And there stood up one of them, named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit, that there should be great dearth throughout all the world : which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cesar, Acts xi. 28.

Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea, Ver. 29.

On days of publick Fasting, read the 1st and 9th of *Nehemiah*, the 9th of *Ezra*, the 9th of *Daniel* ; they will furnish you with excellent Instructions, and proper matters for Meditation, and Examples of Prayer, which may be made applicable to any present circumstance, or at least be a general direction.

To mourn for the Sins of others, we have *David's* Example, *Psalms* cxix. 136. *Rivers of tears run down my eyes, because men keep not thy law.*

And God will return it in mercy to us, even when the publick Calamities are determined.

And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst of it, Ezek. ix. 4.

Slay utterly old and young, but come not near any man on whom is the mark, Ver. 6.

How childish is the compassion of the World !
How apt are we to grieve for, and lament the short-lived miseries that many are exposed to here ? How ready or desirous to help, while we consider not that these

these may be only the pains of necessary Physick, in order to their eternal Happiness? But sin is that poison, of which, however the cup may be gilded, or the taste made grateful to a vitiated Palate, Death, eternal Death, must be the consequence: and can we see those we love, nay, can we see an enemy intoxicated with these deadly Poisons, and not grieve, not pray for their conversion, not endeavour to awake them from their sad deluded dreams? Can any Charity be so great as this, to help them, not only to the necessities of a short Journey, but to put them in that right way that will secure them a Kingdom that shall have no end.

A Deprecation of Judgments, to be used on Days of publick Humiliation, or any other Time, as your Devotions shall suggest.

Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our Fore-fathers, neither take thou vengeance of our Sins.

Our fathers hoped in thee, they trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them; they called upon thee, and were holpen; they put their trust in thee, and were not confounded; but we have sinned and done Iniquity, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy Precepts and from thy Judgments; neither have we hearkned to thy Servants that spake in thy Name.

O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of Face, because we have sinned against thee; but to the Lord our

our God belong Mercies and Forgiveness, tho' we have rebelled against him.

O my God, incline thine ear and hear, for we do not present our supplications before thee for our Righteousness, but for thy great Mercies.

O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, hearken and do, defer not for thine own sake, O my God, for they are thy People, and called by thy Name.

Be merciful, be merciful, and be not angry with us for ever.

Deal not with us according to our Sins, neither reward us after our Iniquities ; but deal with us according to thy great Mercy, even after that multitude of Compassions as thou didst deal with our Fathers in the generations of old.

I beseech thee, by whatsoever is dear unto thee, from all Evil and Adversity, in all times of Necessity, from the Evil and Adversity of this present time ;

Stand up, O Lord, rescue and save us, deliver us, and destroy us not.

From the grievous and terrible Evils of this World ; from Pestilence, Famine, War, Earthquakes, Inundations, great Fires, plague of immoderate Rains, Drought, corrupting Wind, Blasting, Thunder, Lightning, Tempest, epidemical, acute, and evil Diseases, and from sudden Deaths ;

Good Lord, deliver us.

From pernicious evils in the Church ; from private Interpretations, Innovations in holy things ; from the strange doctrines of the Unlearned and Unstable ; from the pride of Novices, and from doating about Questions, and making endless Strifes ;
from

from Heresies, Schisms, Scandals, publick and private ;

Good Lord, deliver us.

From pernicious Evils in the State ; from deifying of Kings, Tyranny ; from flattering of the People, multitude of Rulers, Anarchy ;

Good Lord, deliver us.

From foreign Invasion ; from civil Wars ; from displacing of good and upright Magistrates ; from exalting bad and corrupt men into Office ;

Good Lord, deliver us.

O thou the God and Father of all, deliver me and all Mankind, especially all that need or desire my Prayers, from those grievous Evils to which we are exposed, thro' the malice of evil Spirits, frailty of our nature, or violence of wicked Men ; from an uncomfortable Life, in sadness of Spirit, in infirmity of Body, ill Reports, Want, in Dangers, Imprisonment, Captivity ;

Good Lord, deliver us.

From death in Sin, in Shame, in Torture, in Distraction, in Violence ; from unprepared and from eternal Death ;

Good Lord, deliver us.

To these Deprecations, you may add such further Intercessions, as are suitable to the design of the Day, and as your own Thoughts suggest, or you may use the Devotions in this or any other books, making such Enlargements, Alterations, Applications, as will best suit your own heart, and give you the tenderest sense of what your own and others Sins deserve, the

great want of Mercy and Pardon; and how intirely you and all creatures depend on God, for all the supports and comforts of Life, and for preservation from those evils and calamities to which human Nature is expoſed in their paſſage thro' this World, to the city of Reſt.

C H A P. II.

Of Days of private Humiliation and Retirement.

1. **O**NCE in a week (except prevented by ſuch neceſſary Buſineſs as requires immediate diſpatch and application) imploy two or three hours extraordinary, or at leaſt, as much as your neceſſary Buſineſs will allow, in the ſerious Conſideration of your ſelf, and Examination of your Heart and Actions; to call to mind the greater ſins and errors of your paſt Life, and what are thoſe remaining Infirmities that are ſtill apteſt to prevail over your better Purpoſes; and in particular, what has been the conduct of the laſt Week.

2. Examine how you improve in Virtue and Piety, in the love of God, and hatred of all that is oppoſite to his holy Nature and Laws; this, with an humble confeſſion of your paſt Sins, ariſing from a truly penitent and contrite Spirit, is the firſt part of Devotion proper for a day of private Retirement.

The *Second* is, supplication for Pardon, and application of the Gospel Covenant and Promises made in Christ Jesus. And the

Third is, earnest petitions for the holy Spirit of sanctification; and in particular, for such virtues as you most want.

For the method or manner of this, follow what, by your own Experience, you find most profitable, reading such books as are proper to inform your Understanding, and to direct or assist your Devotion, if needful.

1. To assist your Examinations, you may make use of the catalogue of Sins of Omission and Commission in the *Whole Duty of Man*, in the manner there prescribed; or Judge Hales's *great Audit*; or any other form of the like Nature, taken from the *ten Commandments*, and other parts of the Scripture, as suits you best; then consider what aggravations have made your Faults yet more criminal; how far they have been against Knowledge, against good Resolutions, after great Corrections, or great Mercies; how far your heart is gone into the love of any Sin; if that grows frequent, and you begin to excuse or defend it; that the sense of Shame wears off; that you see no more its Deformity, but seek out, and are glad to find arguments to harden your self into an insensibility as to the shame, guilt, and punishment due to such Crimes: this is indeed to be a hardened and habitual Sinner, and is a most dangerous state; it is a living in rebellion against God, a forfeiting your right to the covenant of Grace, which is on condition of your Faith and Repentance, and so becoming liable to Death eternal, the punishment threatened to

the wilful breakers of God's holy Laws, tho' but the least of them; for tho' no doubt greater Sins are both more defiling, and will be more severely punished than lesser, yet all wilful Sins against Knowledge, and Conviction, and so the effect of choice, will separate from God, and exclude from Heaven.

I will here add a few Particulars, which may much help to give you a true knowledge of your self, tho' not frequently inserted into heads of Examination.

1. As how far you are complying with such corrupt customs of the World, as expose to many Temptations, tho' they are not direct Sins; as spending too much time or money in any innocent Recreations, and the like.

2. If you are slothful or careless, in knowing your Duty, that so your heart may reproach you less for not doing it.

3. If after you are convinced of your Duty, your Will is slack in performing what you know, and readily yields to any pretence for its Neglects.

For if your affections move heavily when attracted by spiritual Objects, as the beauty of Virtue and Wisdom, the happiness of Heaven, as a state of Holiness, Truth, and Love, and yet are easily moved and set on fire by the objects of Sense, it is a sign your state is very imperfect, and in some degree unregenerate.

4. Examine how far you have proceeded in the habits of Mortification and Self-denial, which are both necessary to perfect your own Virtues, and to render you an useful member of Society: the foundation of Self-denial is a cheerful and intire submitting

ting of your will to the will of God, in resolving to do, and (if his providence so disposes) to suffer for the doing his Will, with a calm and steady Mind ; so that neither the flatteries or terror of Men, may affright or tempt you from your duty to God, your Country, your Neighbour, and your self ; being always prepared to encounter the calamities of Life, without murmuring against the wise disposer of all Events, be it loss of Friends, Health, Fortune, unjust Calumnies for well-doing, Contempt, Disgrace, ingratitude of Friends, or unjust oppressions from Men in Power, Persecution for Conscience, or Death it self : In short, to receive all the dispensations of God's providence with love and submission, and to bear the injuries of men with Pity, and a spirit of Charity, ready to return good for evil ; so far as is consistent with Justice, the interest of Virtue, and good of Society.

5. Do you find your esteem and love to your Neighbour is regulated more by their Virtue than your own Interest ; that you love best those that are best ; that you honour and own such as are wise and virtuous, tho' never so poor, of mean Birth, or out of Favour, or however differing in opinion in things disputable ?

6. Do you with prudence endeavour to reform the Vicious, at least not to shew them an abject Respect and Connivance, to promote your own Interest, or that sect or persuasion in Religion you most favour ?

7. Have you a zeal for the honour of Religion, and the Salvation of Souls, and that Christians should live as becomes Christ's Disciples ? and in order to it,

Are you careful to instruct, advise, reprove your Relations, Friends, Servants, and Children?

8. Are you fully perswaded, that Pride, Covetousness, Ill-Nature, Malice, Envy, Slander, and Censoriousness, are Sins opposite to the spirit of the Christian Religion, as well as the more visible vices of Excess and Sensuality? and not only so, but that all eager desires and anxious aspirings after Riches, Honour, and Applause, love of Flattery, impatience of Contradiction, a bitter Spirit, or indecent Language, tho' in defending Truth, are very unbecoming a wise or good Man, and no ways agreeable to the rules of the Gospel; that divine philosophy, whose perfection can never be discovered but by a composed Mind, void both of all sinful Passions, and of all excesses, in those that are lawful and innocent.

I have mentioned these Particulars, because many of them are, without much Scruple, indulged by some who would abhor in themselves (and pass very hard censure on others, who should fall, tho' but once, into) the grosser acts of Disobedience; not reflecting on this, that the same authority which forbids the one, forbids the others, and that under the same threatnings: nor does the holy Scripture give any encouragement to think those to be less Sins that make men Devils, than those that sink them below brutes; only indeed the last are often temptations to the first, the devil being still ready to enter into the swine when so encouraged; but the world having put blacker Characters of reproach on some Sins than others, many may avoid these out of fear of reproach, or respect to men, and not from the motive

tive of the love of God, and a sincere desire of paying an universal obedience to Him, as their Lord and King; for then it would appear in all their actions, at least it would produce a real endeavour after an uniform Perfection; whereas (either from wrong Principles, want of Reflection, Ignorance, or some worse Cause) we see some very defective in Humility, Meekness, Charity; and others, who live indulging an affected levity and vanity, who yet continue in great Devotion, and are constant in attending the most sacred Solemnities of religious Worship.

Some Texts of Scripture to be used as Rules of Examination.

LET us search, and try our ways, and turn unto the Lord, Lam. iii. 40.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Gal. v. 19.

Lasciviousness may include all Levity in Dressing, in Conversation, in giving ear to vain Courtships, Flattery, admitting or indulging any irregular Passion, in not rejecting the first approach to what is criminal: *Idleness* may come under this head, as the great Field that produces these poisonous Weeds; also all the time that is lost on such Recreations, books as corrupt the Mind, and add fuel to the Passions.

I have added these short Explications to some Words, by Reason many who abhor and are free from the grosser Immoralities, yet indulge themselves in many of these lesser Faults; perhaps not knowing that some of them are Sins, and not considering, that tho' not directly sinful in themselves, yet they

*they have a tendency,
and dispose the Mind
to what is sinful.*

Idolatry; that is, all false Worship, tho' of the true God, by Images, &c. all Creature-worship whatever, loving or fearing the creature immoderately, and more than God, so as to be more careful to please, or fearful to offend Man than God.

Witchcraft, going to, or trusting in Astrologers, Fortune-tellers, observing days, omens, traditionary spells and charms.

Hatred, Variance, indulging a contentious and opposing temper, loving Divisions, without necessity or just cause.

Emulations, grieving at, and detracting from those Perfections in others, we either cannot, or will not acquire our selves.

Wrath, Strife, Seditions, an impatience under a just subjection to Laws and good Government.

Heresies; which are errors in Religion arising from a pride of the Mind, pretending to be wise above what is written; that is, what God has revealed in his holy Word for us, and our Children, to believe, and to do; intruding into things not seen; affecting to explain what they cannot know, and what a finite, imperfect, and depraved intellect cannot comprehend; and to convey to others adequate Idea's of an infinite and perfect Essence, the first cause of all Things; striving about words to no profit, forgetting that the end of the commandments is Charity; neglecting the commandments and revelations from God, and making necessary to the Salvation of Souls, and the Terms of church Communion, the believing of the additional Doctrines, or the doing

ing the supererrogated commands and traditions of Men.

To make doubtful speculations the cause of divisions in the Church, proceeds generally from a proud, contentious Spirit; and all such as divide from, and stubbornly disobey, the laws and institutions of the Society, civil or ecclesiastical, on account of Things purely ceremonial, which, tho' liable to Objections, they confess are not sinful, do involve themselves in the guilt of needless separation, obstruct the progress of true Piety, and the improvement of useful Truths, taking up and clouding mens Minds by the dust of needless Contentions; but tho' all dividers in these cases are condemned, yet the rigid and tyrannical imposers of Things justly exceptionable, tho' not unlawful, are by no means excusable, and must answer to God for such offences; as laying a stumbling-block in their Brother's way to offend by.

I have perhaps said too much on this Head; but the melancholy reflections which the present state we are in raises, has led me into it. We see the illeffects these things already have, and may justly fear yet worse; and we can never expect to see a cure of these Evils, till all sides lay more to heart the great obligations Christians have to Charity and Union, to mutual Love and Forbearance; till then, Religion (I mean not a party, but Christianity, as laid down in God's word) can neither thrive at home, nor spread its roots abroad. But how dangerous soever Heresy and Schisms are to the proud and contentious Beginners or Maintainers of them, let not the meek and humble ones fear the like dangers from
such

such mistakes, as their own weakness of Judgment, or the crafty subtilty of others expose them to; for to them such misapprehensions shall not be Heresies, but simply Errors, which the goodness of God will pardon on a general Repentance, and deliver them from the Error, or save them from its malignant Consequences, if they are sincere, and their heart is upright before God; since every one that truly feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, shall be accepted of him.

Envyings; that is, being grieved for the Virtue, Wisdom, Learning, Riches, Honour, or deserved Praises of another.

Murders of the Body, or Reputation of another; also all that tends to these Mischiefs.

Rebellings; that is, Rioting, and drunken, lewd Frolicks; all vain Recreations, that dissipate the Mind, ingage men in ill Company, lose much Time, are expensive, and obstruct Charity, and the like; Of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God, Gal. v. 21.

For without are dogs, and forcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lye, Rev. xxii. 10.

If a man say, he loveth God, and hateth his brother he is a liar, &c. 1 John iv. 20.

And this commandment have we of God, that he that loveth God, love his brother also, Ver. 21.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, Mat. xxii. 37.

Thou

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self, Ver. 39.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets, Ver. 40.

If ye love them which love you ; what reward have you ? Do not even the publicans the same ? Mat. v. 46.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, Ver. 44.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, Mat. vi. 14.

Whosoever is ashamed of me, or my words ; that is, ashamed to own himself my disciple, by obeying my Commands, tho' it should expose him to the persecutions or contempt of Men, of him shall the son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of the Father, Mark viii. 38.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Tit. viii. 11.

Teaching us, that denying ungodliness, that is, all impiety ; and worldly lust, that is, all immorality, we should live soberly with respect to our selves, righteously with respect to our Neighbour, and godly with respect to God, in this present world, Ver. 12.

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Ver. 13.

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, not to save us in our sins, but from them, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works, Ver. 14.

Next, you are to consider what are the several aggravations of Sin.

First,

First, If against knowledge ; the degrees of Aggravation rise according to the degrees and clearness of Conviction, that such or such things as you do or omit, are contrary to your Duty ; not that wilful ignorance will excuse any Sin, but so far as it was, more or less, an involuntary Ignorance, it will lessen your Guilt.

And the servant that knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, Luke xii. 47.

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required ; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more, Ver. 48.

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, thro' the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning, 2 Pet. ii. 20.

For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandments delivered them, Ver. 21.

Secondly, If you sin after Resolutions and Vows of Reformation, and some progress therein.

But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth, all his righteousness that he hath done, shall not be mentioned ; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned ; in them shall he die, Exod. xviii. 24. Read the whole Chapter.

Be thou faithful to the death, and thou shalt obtain the crown of life, Rev. ii. 10.

To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life, Rom. ii. 7.

BUT the heinous aggravations of Sins, against Knowledge and good Resolutions, must not be understood to extend to the lesser Sins of Infirmary, and Surprise, but of wilful and deliberate returns to, or indulgence in any, habitual Sins; nor yet must the falling into any, even of these, discourage Repentance, and drive to Despair and an obdurate state of Insensibility: this is to pass into a state of Damnation even in this World, and is the worst choice a Sinner can make; and if he dies in it, his exclusion from Heaven is the act of his own Will, not God's; who has declared, that *he willetb not the death of a sinner, but that he should repent and live*; therefore let your sins be of what nature, or have what aggravations soever, it is certain, the best thing that is left for such unhappy Persons is, to repent and amend, and to do all that they can to regain Pardon and Peace, and then cast themselves on God's infinite mercy declared in Christ Jesus: if they are at last sincere, there is great cause to hope they shall find Mercy; however, they will lose nothing: it may abate their Punishment, or dispose for a lower degree of Happiness; and where there is the least hope left to escape God's wrath, and but one possible way to do it, it is great madness to reject that only Remedy.

Thirdly, Sins after great Corrections, which are calls to Repentance, receive another Aggravation.

In vain have I smitten your children, they have received no correction, &c. Jer. ii. 30.

O Lord, Are not thine eyes upon the truth? Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved, &c. Jer. v. 3.

Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, Isa. i. 5.

Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastning of the Almighty, Job v. 17.

For whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth, even as a father the son, in whom he delighteth, Prov. iii. 12.

For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, Heb. xii. 6.

God afflicteth only for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness, Rev. xii. 10.

Now no chastning for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby, Ver. 11.

Fourthly, A fourth Aggravation is, if you go on in a sinful course of Life after great Mercies and Deliverances.

Despiseest thou the riches of God's goodness and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? Rom. ii. 4.

For she did not know (or consider) that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, Hosea ii. 8.

Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, Deut. viii. 11.

Left

Left when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein ; Ver. 12.

And when thy herds and thy flocks, thy silver and gold, and all that thou hast is multiplied, Ver. 13.

Thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, Ver. 14.

The word of God being the great rule of a Christian's duty, I have collected these few Passages, as the most indisputed rules to try your self by ; the holy scripture having a peculiar Power and Authority superior to all human compositions ; therefore I have frequently inserted large portions of those sacred books throughout this little Work, which has little else to recommend it to you ; but if got by heart, the Scriptures here collected on every head of Devotion and Duty, or such others as your own reading the Bible frequently shall direct you to, you will never be unprovided of a certain Direction, what those things are which you are to do or to forbear, so far as is necessary to your present and future State : you need not tie your self to any one form of Examination, but take sometimes one, sometimes another. Your Examination being performed, both as to the nature and aggravations of your Faults, especially such as are aptest to return, go on to make an humble Confession of all your past Sins and remaining Infirmities, with a truly sorrowful Heart, and an humble sense of your great Unworthiness of the divine Mercy.

Now this sorrow for Sin must not only be for fear of Punishment, but from a clear conviction of the
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real evil of it, of the excellency of God's Laws, and the reasonableness of Virtue, and from a sincere love of God, which will produce a grief for having dishonoured, disobeyed, and displeased the most excellent Being, your most kind Lord and Benefactor : for you are not to think of God as a Tyrant, who delights to impose grievous or extravagant Laws, to shew his Power, or gratify his Cruelty in punishing Transgressors ; but you are to consider God as a wise and kind Father, all whose commands tend to the present or future good and happiness of his Children ; tho' some of them may be less pleasing, or not so well understood, by reason of the weakness of our childish Capacities, that make us apt to prefer a present satisfaction, tho' never so trivial, to any far greater that is out of sight and future : what God forbids, is really hurtful ; an allowance to sin would not be true Liberty ; it would be only to change our obedience to God, and our reason into a slavery to Passion and brutish Appetites. You will not, if in a good state of Mind, have so much as a secret wish to alter God's holy laws, but only to rectify your own heart by them. For a right temper of Mind, and a true contrition for Sin, does arise from the clear views of your Understanding, upon which your Will readily consents to all God's commands as good and just ; and you will perceive, that to be enabled to keep them, is your privilege as well as your duty, and the proper exercise of a rational creature ; and that rebellion against God is most irrational.

All wilful Sin is a monstrous Deformity, the only real Evil ; a sin may be greater or less, but can never
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be an object of Choice, it having in its nature an inherent Pravity, as contrary to the pure and perfect nature of God ; so that a soul truly enlightened and purified, would not sin, tho' beforehand sure of Impunity and Pardon.

I apprehend these convictions of the evil of Sin, and its being the only proper object of your hatred and aversion, are in some degree produced in all that are truly regenerate and converted, tho' through Ignorance, want of Reflection and Application, they may not discover themselves ; for so long as the love of any known Sin remains, the true Conversion is not perfected : but by known Sins, I do not mean such as have no foundation, but in the Fancy of men of different Tempers, but such as are contrary to the plain laws of God and Nature.

But let melancholy persons, of weak and scrupulous Constitutions, take heed not to entangle themselves in their Examinations ; they are very bad judges in their own case : therefore they would do well to let others assist them in the judgment they pass ; only let them choose such Directors as are wise and pious, whose doctrine and life are most conformable to the word of God ; not fanciful, but strictly virtuous and charitable : for those who are superstitious or enthusiastical, but much more those who are immoral, will do more harm than good to any who put themselves under their direction : nor do I suppose that such as have been so unhappy as to let any Sin grow habitual, can all on a sudden get free from every degree of that Sin. One of a hasty, passionate Temper, and so men inclined to Pride, Covetous-

ness, &c. may find the beginnings of those ill humors rise in their Minds, even after their reason and conscience are so far awakened, as to see and detest the Sin, and to resolve against it. So that the will shall no more consent to it, nor the affections delight in it, but resist and check it, so soon as it discovers it self. As a Drunkard may be dry without Sin, after he has resolved against Intemperance; but if he gratify that appetite, by indulging excess, and relapse into his former ill habit, he sins wilfully; for how involuntary soever the first motion to any sin may be, it can't be wilfully entertained in the Mind, much less allowed to appear in our Words and Actions, without leaving us under the guilt of wilful Sin: and tho' they may not always be so deliberate, as constitutes the nature of wilful Sins, yet they are at least sins of Surprise and Infirmity, and as such they are to be repented of, and more carefully watched against for the future; and in time even these dispositions may, by a strict watch, and constant endeavour after their opposite Virtues, be subdued, and the contrary Graces grow habitual; the most Covetous may grow liberal, the Proud humble, the Passionate mild and gentle, &c. But to prevent all needless scrupulosity, the hatred of Sin required, as necessary to true conversion, must so far arise from the consideration of the wisdom and goodness of God's Laws, as to induce us to approve them as most excellent, just, and reasonable; and as such we must resolve to submit to their Conduct, and to yield an entire and impartial Obedience to them all.

I recommend this frequent confessing and lamenting past Sins, as well as daily Infirmities, (not but that if you are a true Penitent, you may comfort your self with the belief of being pardoned upon your first serious Repentance) but because such repeated Confessions are of great advantage to the increasing your Humility and Watchfulness against falling again by the same Temptations, and your fuller convictions of the folly and dangerous consequence of every wilful Sin: for want of this, among the many that say they repent, How few do we see *bringing forth fruit meet for repentance*? Of how few can it be said, They love much, because much has been forgiven them? We are very ready to comfort our selves by the examples of great Sinners, who obtained Mercy, but do not endeavour to imitate their Repentance. Sorrow for sin cannot be hurtful, so long as joined with hope and endeavours to amend. A depression under the sense of Sin, may indeed be excessive; it may turn into a disease instead of a cure, and end in Superstition or Infidelity; and 'tis always a bad sign when your sense of past Sins indisposes you for present Duties, and occasions a useless sadness and sloth, or tempts you to entertain false and hard thoughts of God, as a Being implacable and cruel, &c. whereas God is all Mercy and Compassion, and ever ready to be gracious to all that are capable to receive his Grace and Favour, that is, all that truly turn to Him.

But indeed those black thoughts of God, and mistakes of his Nature and his Laws, are seldom the effects of a true sorrow and sense of the evil

of Sin, but are very often the effects of an ill constitution of Body, and sometimes they arise from the just terrors of Punishment, which they cannot but fear while they find their love to sin remains in them; and that tho' they put on some outward Reformation, yet their hearts are still in an opposition to the holy nature of God.

This excess of sadness, under the sense of Sin, may also be the effect of Pride, and a partial Self-love, that can't bear the thoughts of that Dishonour and Contempt that is the natural companion of Sin, that they are fallen below all those whose Virtue has been steadier than their own; and if birth or fortune softens the world's Censures, yet their own hearts condemn them, and torment them; they are therefore glad to find others as bad, and envy those who are more innocent; impatient to bare the remembrance of their past Follies, that they could ever be such weak and deluded creatures, so sunk below a rational Nature, and that all their present pain and fears of future Miseries, are but the just consequences of their wilful Choice; so that from the pride and stubbornness of their Spirits, (instead of humiliation and self-abasement under the sense of Sin, and a tender sorrow for having offended God) they fret and grow angry against themselves, and change a just grief into a fruitless self condemning fury; and finding it so hard to be reconciled to themselves, they can hardly, with any Steadiness or Comfort, apprehend how God can be reconciled to them. So that, I fear, what is often called trouble of Mind, has its beginning from
Pride,

Pride, and an unwillingness to part with what they are convinced is sinful.

But if you are truly humbled, and sensible of the evil of Sin, you will submissively bear all those debasements and reproaches of your own Mind, or what comes from the tongues of others, as the just punishment of your Sins: and tho' the censures of the World should be without Charity, and aggravate your follies beyond the Truth, yet you will bear it with Patience, and be ready to forgive those that so despitefully use you: and if you truly love God and your Neighbour, you will not envy, but rejoice in their brighter virtue and innocence; and from your own experience of Sin's deformity, be very zealous to prevent it in others, especially to preserve young Persons from its delusions, whose passions and unexperience are too apt to betray them into a conformity to the World and its evil Customs.

In short, the word of God and right reason will tell us plainly, that if we have been so unhappily deluded, as to fall into a state of Sin, be it to a greater or less degree, yet still the best thing we can do, and all that can help us, is sincere Repentance, ceasing to do any more evil, and learning, so fast as we can, to do well; a strict avoiding all the temptations to offend, with strong Resolutions and Endeavours to do the best things we can; approving the sincerity of our love to God, and the truth of our Repentance, by a steady keeping of all God's commandments; endeavouring to be full of good Works, and in particular, to be watchful in the exercise of that useful part of penitence and mortification, the bringing all

the Passions and Affections under the government of Reason, in the least as well as in the hardest instances and trials; and when you have thus honestly done the best you can; resign your self and your own will interely to the will of God, both with respect to inward comfort or your outward reputation in this World. God is just and merciful, and will not forsake the soul that seeketh him.

Such fruits as these can hardly spring but from a good tree; and I doubt not but they will ripen into Peace and Assurance, and at last be perfected in Joy and Glory.

Indeed Sin is of a condemning nature, and separates from God, but the new Covenant in Christ admits of repentance; so that repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, is preached to the greatest of Sinners; and all who come to God thro' Christ, for his sake, shall find mercy in the pardon of Sin, reconciliation to God, the assistance of his holy Spirit, and an admission to his kingdom of Life and Glory. These are the gospel Promises, and shall surely be made good to all such, as on their part perform the Conditions; which are summed up in Repentance, Faith, and new Obedience, according to the rules of God's holy Word.

But tho' Examination and Confession are the first and proper employments of a day of Humiliation and Retirement; yet as to the method or form of doing it, so it be done honestly, and without superstition, let your own experience, or such books as you like best, be your directors; only have a care of two extremes, overlooking and indulging real Faults, or
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being nice, and raising endless scruples about trifling Infirmities and imaginary Defects: God does not desire the sorrows or sufferings of his Creatures, but in order to their Benefit. So that 'tis gross superstition to think that God is to be atoned by such rigorous Mortifications, as put you to pain to no end; therefore all mortifications that serve not as instruments of Virtue, are to be avoided. 'Twas *Baal's* Priests that mixt their blood with their Devotions; and 'tis the Devil only that delights in the torments of his Votaries: folly in some, and hypocritical designs in others, have sometimes recommended such uncommanded will-worship to pious Souls; but the *true Mortification* of a sincere Penitent, is to subdue every *Passion* and *Appetite* to the will of God, and to right reason; to despise the vain pomp of Life; to prefer a virtuous Act, to Honour, Interest, Pleasure; to be ready to suffer, nay to die for Truth, for Virtue, for your Country, or your Friends; to be ready to deny your ease, your meat, drink, sleep, diversion, not barely to vex your self, but when you can do others any real good by it; to be ready to resign Friends, Honour, Fortune, not at your own will, but at God's will, when his wise Providence deprives you of them; to give freely of your abundance, nay to spare from your lawful conveniencies, to relieve or help the pressing miseries of others; to defend the oppressed, vindicate the injured, and the like.

These are the noble and useful acts of self-denial and mortification, and not those heathenish and superstitious Whimfies, which spring generally from

Pride, Folly, or Discontent, and are of little use to themselves, and none to the World.

Another thing to be avoided in the exercise of Repentance is, an over-indulging sadness and moroseness of Humour; it tends much to the dishonour of Piety and Virtue, which is the truest friend to *good humour* and *good breeding* in the World: and I have seldom known a good wise man that had not all the *essentials* of good humor, good breeding, and a decent cheerfulness.

Some peoples constitutions are naturally sad; however, let them not indulge that, or think it an act of Virtue or of Religion, but be willing to amend it as well as they can, which is all that is required of them; for tempers will differ as long as we are subject to the infirmities of Mortality; only take care not to deceive your self, by thinking Repentance consists in sad Looks, or the outward act of repeating Words, whereby you express a sorrow for, and hatred to Sin, when your heart really loves it, and only fears Hell: that may be a good beginning, but never think this part of Devotion right, till you find your understanding, will, and affections united in this, that you approve God's laws; see the beauty, justice, and expedience of every command of God; that the general dispensing with any one of them, would be the breaking the chain of Virtues, and a hurt to the whole, and to Society; that Vice appears irregular and deformed; that this view raises in you a desire and a longing to be in all things conformable to the rules of Christian Morality, and fixes your will and choice to the use of all the proper means to obtain it.

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This disposition of mind is true Repentance, and will, if sincere, bring forth fruits meet for it.

As to the manner, whatever methods you choose, be sure so far to examine them by your Heart, that both may agree; and if you approve a form, make such alterations as you find proper to your own state of Mind, and be sure not to lie to God, by pretending to a Repentance that you have not at Heart. Words may deceive men, and thro' a careless spirit deceive your self, but can't deceive God, who searches the Heart.

Reflect a little on the following Scriptures, the better to dispose your self for a serious confession of your past sins.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer, Psal. xix. 14.

I will declare my iniquity, and be sorry for my sin, Psal. xxxviii. 18.

He that covereth his sins, shall not prosper; but who-so confesseth and forsaketh them, shall find mercy, Prov. xxviii. 13.

Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness sake, O Lord, Psal. xxv. 7.

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults, Psal. xix. 12.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression, Ver. 13.

That great Sins, tho' long past, ought to be frequently remembred and lamented, appears in these passages.

I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me, Psal. li. 3.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief, 1 Tim. i. 15.

Then shall ye remember your own evil way, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe your selves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations, Ezek. xxxvi. 31.

That all love of sin must be subdued, appears from these.

Love not the world, neither the things of the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 John ii. 15.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, Ver. 16.

A Confession of Sins out of Archbp. TILLOTSON.

MOST Gracious and Merciful God, who art of purer eyes than to behold Iniquity; I desire to humble my soul before thee, in a deep sense of my own vileness and unworthiness: I am a sinful Creature, O Lord, and not worthy to lift up mine eyes to thee my God: my whole life hath been little else than a course of Disobedience, and unworthy returns to thee for all thy Benefits.

[Here recollect your past life; also stop a little, and consider all the Aggravations of those Sins you have been, or are most apt to fall into.]

I confess the folly of my childhood, and the greater sins and vanities of my Youth, and the many
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great provocations which, in the course of my Life, I have been often, too often guilty of.

Forgive, O Lord, forgive, I pray thee, all the past Sins and Follies of my Life, which have been so many and great, and which I do now, with shame and sorrow, confess and bewail before thee, for thy Mercy's sake in Jesus Christ. Pardon, O my God, my manifold neglects and omissions, and slight and careless performances of the duties of Religion, without due affection and attention of Mind ; that I have not served thee with that purity of Intention, with that sincerity of Heart, with that fervency of Spirit, with that zeal for thy Glory, with that care and diligence, and constancy that I ought.

Forgive, O Lord, my Sins of Ignorance and Infirmary, which are more than can be numbered, but especially all my wilful transgressions of thy holy and righteous Laws, the impurity of my heart and thoughts, all irregular Appetites and Passions, and every sinful and wicked practice, of what nature or kind soever : these my transgressions, with many more which I cannot remember and reckon up before thee, are all in thy sight, O Lord, and my most secret Sins are in the light of thy countenance. When I look back upon the errors and miscarriages of my past Life, and consider with my self what I have done, and what I deserve at thy hands, my flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments. I am ashamed, O my God, to lift up mine eyes to thee, my God. Lord, I am vile, What shall I answer thee ? I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes.

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Make me deeply sensible of the great evil of my Sins, and work in me a hearty contrition for them; and let the sense of them, be more grievous to me, than of any other evil whatsoever.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord, and according to thy tender mercy, forgive all my transgressions, for the sake of my blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

2dly, THE next part of Devotion, after Examination and Confession, is, Supplication for pardon and mercy, for the sake, and in virtue of the merits and sufferings of that Lamb of God, who takes away the Sins of the World.

To assist you in this part of Devotion, meditate much on the gospel Promises, the nature and attributes of God, especially his perfect Goodness and Bignity, that the foundation of your faith and hope may be firm and steady: and if you find any doubts about the understanding, or applying these Promises, consult some pious or learned Friend or Minister, that your judgment may be set right and clear, so as to prevent the ill effects of melancholy, or at least to be able to discern between a reasonable cause of Disquiet, and a natural oppression of the Spirits. And this perswasion of God's love to all who sincerely turn to him, will secure you from the terrors of a servile Fear; for as you find your love of God to increase, fear will naturally wear off, and an humble dependance will grow more and more; for we can't fear where we love, and where we find in our selves a real will and desire to please and serve; unless

unless it be when we suspect the persons we fear of cruelty of Nature, of Injustice, or ignorance of our Sincerity, which no one can think of God, who has true apprehensions of him, or of the nature and design of the Gospel and new Covenant in Christ Jesus, of the excellencies of his Person and Offices, and the infinite merit of his Obedience and Sacrifice: all these so manifestly setting forth the merciful nature of Almighty God, his willingness to forgive the Penitent, his accepting our sincerity instead of Perfection, and his readiness to assist our Weakness, that an honest mind cannot fall into despair, but from error or distemper.

You may extend these Supplications for pardon and mercy, to the removing or preventing those temporal judgments due to Sin: and by observing the natural ill consequences and mischiefs of disobeying the divine Laws, awaken your mind to a just sense of that terrible share of judgment you deserve, did not the mercy of God interpose, who is slow to Anger, and ready to forgive. But since God has a design of mercy in the temporal punishments of this Life, which is a state of probation and penitence, let your Prayers for the removing outward sufferings, be with a perfect resignation and submission to the will and glory of God, your own and your Neighbour's edification and profit: if sufferings are necessary to these ends, they are good, and not evil; therefore leave the choice to God, who best knows what is best for you; praying that by repentance and sanctification, you may be fitted for Mercies and Blessings, and you need not fear to have them, so far

far as they are good for you, therefore when you are under correction, pray rather to have it sanctified than removed, that God, as your Father, will amend you by it, and support you in it, and make you sensible, that no suffering is so grievous as Sin, and the lying under the displeasure of offended Mercy.

Also in your petitions for any temporal Good, the same resignation and indifference must be endeavoured; but against real Evil, you cannot pray too earnestly; such as the wrath of God, the withdrawing his Grace, being left to your self, to a blind judgment, a hard heart, a stupidity in Sin, unbelief, error, and final condemnation, and separation from the Love of God.

3dly, To conclude this exercise, renew your good purposes of sincere and universal obedience to the will of God, as revealed in the holy Scriptures; particularly consider where you observe your self most defective, and there renew your resolutions of greater care and watchfulness; compare your heart and practice with your baptismal Covenant, and such other good purposes as you have at any time made, if agreeable to the rules of the Gospel.

Then finish your devotions with praying for the divine assistance, and the aids of God's holy Spirit, to render your endeavours effectual to the attaining those Graces and Virtues you pray for; your natural strength is small, and even that is much impaired by evil customs or former evil habits: nor can you ever be more in danger of falling into Sin or Error, than when you are lifted up with a vain presumption of
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of your own sufficiency ; therefore remember that an humble dependance on God, is your best security : only take care that your prayers for Grace may be sincere ; that you truly desire the Virtue you pray for, and are ready to use the proper means to attain it ; that you honestly avoid temptations so soon as observed ; as that company, those recreations, studies, or employments, by which you are apt to offend ; and to watch against, and to root out every growing inclination to your former Sins.

If you are truly willing to leave your sin, or sins, and turn to God, God is ready to perform all his Promises, and the effect will follow : but 'tis your divided heart between the fear of God and love to your Sins, that proves so unfruitful. Therefore be both earnest and constant in your endeavours to obtain those Graces and Virtues you ask in Prayer, and you can't fail ; imploring divine illumination and sanctification, that you may never resist those sacred Monitors that incline you to Good, nor grieve the holy Spirit by the commission of wilful Sin, or the indulging an unattentive temper of mind, and so not observing, or resisting the checks that Reason and Conscience give in the beginnings of disobedience. Carefully avoid all that indisposes you to self-observation, and the divine direction ; as the permitting your heart to be possessed and rent with anxious Cares, or the allowing your self to find a rest and inward satisfaction that wholly possesses your mind in vain Pleasures. Fly all irregular passions and affections, either in respect to their object or their degree, that so you may neither fix on an unlawful

lawful object, nor on lawful ones beyond the due limits of your relative Duties, or the merit of the object you affect.

For if your concern is over anxious, and feeds discontent, or occasions the neglect of other Duties, it may be a fault, tho' imployed on the most lawful objects; as, for your Friends, Relations, Country, &c.

'Tis true, while we live in the world, and are parts of Societies, and have Bodies liable to so many Wants, some cares will be necessary, and some recreations may be allowable; yet if you abandon your self to a perpetual toil in the one, which often brings grief and discontent; or find resting complacency in the other, so as to be ready to say, It is good for Us to be here, and here shall my rest be; it is a sign the heart is wandered from its true object, and is pursuing a false end, that will in conclusion produce nothing but Vanity and vexation of Spirit.

*A Prayer for the divine Assistance, in order
to a more Christian Life, out of Archbishop
TILLOTSON.*

AND now, O Lord, in confidence of thy great mercy and goodness to all that are truly penitent, and sincerely resolve to do better, I most humbly implore the grace and assistance of thy holy Spirit, to enable me to become every day better, and to reform whatever has been amiss in the temper and disposition of my Mind, or in any of the actions of my Life. Grant me the wisdom and understanding
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to know my Duty, and the heart and will to do it. Vouchsafe to me the continual presence and direction, the assistance and comforts of thy holy Spirit, whereby I may be disposed and enabled to do thy will with Delight and Chearfulness, and with Patience and Contentedness to submit to it in all things. Endue me, O Lord, with the true fear and love of thee, and with a prudent zeal for thy Glory. Encrease in me more and more, the graces of Charity and Meekness, of Truth, and Justice, and Fidelity: give me Humility and Patience, and a firmness of Spirit to bear every condition with Constancy and Equality of Mind.

Enable me, O Lord, by thy Grace, to govern all my Appetites, and to subdue every inordinate lust and passion, by Temperance and Purity, and Meekness of Wisdom, setting thee always before me, that I may not sin against thee. Create in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me. Purify my soul from all evil Thoughts and Inclinations, from all bad Intentions and Designs. Deliver me, O Lord, from Pride, and Vanity, from immoderate Self-love, and obstinate Self-will, and from all Malice, and Envy, and Ill-will towards any.

Make me to love thee, as I ought, above all things; and let the interest of thy Honour and Glory be ever dearer to me than my own Will or Reputation, or any temporal advantage whatsoever.

Subdue in me the evil spirit of Wrath and Revenge, and dispose my heart patiently to bear Re-

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proaches and Wrongs, and to be ready not only to forgive, but return good for evil.

Assist me, O Lord, more especially in the faithful and conscientious discharge of the Duties of that Station in which thou hast placed me ; and grant that I may employ all those talents and advantages that thy bounteous Providence has intrusted me with, for thy Glory, and the good of my Neighbour.

Confirm me, O my God, in all these holy Resolutions, and do thou keep it for ever in the purpose of my heart, to perform them to the utmost of my power. All which I humbly beg for thy Mercies sake in Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer of Intercession out of the same Author.

I Thine unworthy Servant, desire likewise humbly to interceed with thee, the God and Father of All, for all Mankind ; that thou wouldst be pleased to have compassion upon their Blindness and Ignorance, their gross Errors and their wicked Practices. Send forth, I beseech thee, thy Light and thy Truth, to scatter that thick darkness which covers the Nations, and overspreads so great a part of the World, that thy way may be known upon Earth, and thy saving health among all Nations.

Bless and preserve thy Church, dispersed over the face of the Earth ; restore to it Unity and Concord, in the acknowledgment of the Truth, and the practice of Righteousness and Goodness. Remove out of
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it all Errors and Corruptions, all Offences and Scandals, all Divisions and Dissentions, all Tyranny and Usurpation over the Minds and Consciences of Men; that they who profess the same faith, may no longer persecute and destroy one another; but may be kind and tender-hearted one towards another; as it becomes Brethren, and that those are heirs of the same common Salvation.

I beseech thee, more especially, to be merciful to that part of thy Church, which thou hast planted in these Kingdoms. Pity the distractions, and heal the breaches of it. Purge out of it all Impiety and Profaneness: take away those mistakes and mutual exasperations which cause so much Distemper and Disturbance, and restore to it Piety and Virtue, Peace and Charity. Endue the Pastors and Governors of it, with the spirit of true Religion and Goodness, and make them zealous and diligent to promote it in those who are under their Instruction and Care. Give them wisdom to discern the best and most proper means of composing the differences of this miserably divided Church, the heart to endeavour it, and by thy blessing upon their endeavours, the happiness to effect it.

Be merciful, O God, to this my native Country, with all other reformed Kingdoms and States: unite them in thy Truth, perfect them in Charity. Bless more especially our Gracious Sovereign the King. Endue him with all those Graces and Virtues which may fit him for that high station wherein thou hast placed him. Give him Wisdom and Resolution for such a time as this: discover and defeat all the de-

signs of wicked and unreasonable Men against him and his government: make him a great and successful example of Piety and Virtue, to an evil and degenerate Age. Direct and bless all his Counsels and Resolutions, especially in the choice of those who rule under him in Church and State, that they may every one do their duty in their several Stations, as may be most for thy Glory, and the publick Good, remembring the account they must all one day make.

Use this in time of War. Bless all our Allies: O righteous Lord, that lovest righteousness and hatest falsehood and wrong, do thou stand by us in the maintenance of that just Cause in which we are engaged, and bless us with Union and good Success. And in thy good time, O Lord, restore Peace to Christendom; put an end to those bloody Wars and Desolations wherewith it hath been so long and so miserably harrassed; and when thou seest it best and fittest, manifest thy glorious Justice in giving a check to that Ambition and Cruelty which has been the cause of so great calamities to so great a part of the World. O God, to whom Vengeance belongeth, O God, to whom Vengeance belongeth, shew thy self; lift up thy self, thou Judge of the Earth, and render a reward to the Proud; scatter the people that delight in War; let the wickedness of the Wicked come to an end, but do thou establish the Just.

Be merciful, O God, to all that are in Affliction or Distress, that labour under Poverty, or Persecution, or Captivity; under bodily Pains and Diseases,

or

or under Temptation and trouble of Mind. Be pleased to support and comfort them; and in thy due time, deliver them according to thy great Mercy. I beseech thee, O Lord, of thy great Goodness, to bless, as most meet, all my Relations and Friends.

Forgive, I beseech thee, most merciful Father, to all mine Enemies, all their Malice and Ill-will towards me, and give them Repentance and better Minds; which I heartily beg of thee for them, as I my self hope for Mercy and Forgiveness at thy hand; thro' the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, my most merciful God and Saviour. *Amen.*

THIS Exercise being long, you may divide it into parts, with proper reflections between each part; or when you have time, or find no weariness, but your attention keeps steady, go thro' the whole devotional part at once.

But before you leave your Closet, or in some convenient part of the same Day, consider again what may be the properest Means, and most likely to succeed in the accomplishing that great end of all Devotion, the walking worthy of your Christian Vocation, and as becomes one dedicated to God's Service, and entred into Christ's School, as his Disciple; especially have in your view those Sins and Infirmities that you are most liable to, from natural Constitution, from your Conversation, or condition of Life, your Place or Calling. Also consider how to perfect those Christian Graces, moral Virtues, or intellectual Qualities you yet find low and defective in your self.

Only in making your good Resolutions, observe these Rules,

First, Remember all wilful Sins must be renounced and resolved against, before you can hope you are in a state of Salvation, or a Child of God.

2dly, You must resolve to obey all God's Commands, so far as you know them, and sincerely endeavour it by the use of proper Methods, though thro' your Infirmities, you fall short of Perfection in your Obedience. But,

3dly, Where there is no Command or Prohibition, bind not your self positively, or for *long periods of Time* in things indifferent, and where it is lawful to do or not to do; but try the usefulness of such Impositions on your liberty to the great ends of Religion, and their suitedness to your own Strength, by short periods of some Days, Weeks, Months, and then renew or cancel those resolutions of any extraordinary Acts of Piety, exercises of Self-denial, Charity, or the like, as you see cause; never forgetting this caution, that *whatever tends not to some real good to your self or your Neighbour*, but is only *needlessly uneasy*, is so far from being *religious*, that 'tis *superstition* and folly.

To prevent which, I advise you, especially till you have more Age and Experience, that you be not rash, or make any resolutions not clearly warranted by God's Word, on a sudden emotion and warmth of Mind; but consider them carefully again and again; try if they will abide the test of Reason, and rule of the holy Scriptures; for if they are only fanciful Affectations, they will minister more to Vanity and Self-conceit, than real Holiness: but the safest way is, first to advise with some sober and pious Guide, of some years and experience: for the most part, all
such

such free-will offerings, tho' never so good and well chosen, had far better be the sacrifice of every Day, and not to oblige longer, without renewing them, to tie your self for long periods of Time, which may prove a snare to Sin, instead of raising and being a help to Devotion; for such extraordinary Vows are generally rash and superstitious, the effects of Weakness or Fear, and are often practised with Vanity, and an ill-natured severity to others who do not.

To conclude: Before you leave your Closet, pray for Perseverance, and a truly mortified Spirit, and rest not in the outward Performance, but observe the manner and end of your Humiliation, which is not a bare confessing your Sins, or afflicting your Body, which is the means, not the end of Repentance; for that consists in a sincere reformation of Life, in an entire mortification of your Passions and irregular Affections, in subduing your will to the will of God, and in establishing a true Dominion over your self, in which the liberty, or rather the sovereignty of your rational Faculties consists; which will enable you to receive, with Love and Complacency, either Comforts or Sufferings, as it seems meet to the wise Disposer of all things to send them to you.

Finish your Devotion with a short commemoration of Christ's Sufferings, praying that the Merit of his sacrifice may be accepted, as the propitiation for your Sins; that you may be purified in the Blood of the Lamb; and the offering of your Soul and Body, may be acceptable, for the sake, and in union with that only perfect Sacrifice, and in vir-

tue of the powerful Intercession of that great High-Priest, who is entred within the Vail, Christ Jesus.

Consider Christ's appearing in the Flesh, not only as your Redeemer from Punishment, but as your Instructor and Example, to make you truly good and holy, and the greatest manifestation of God's Love to Men, which ought to dispose you to an humble and filial confidence in God's Mercy, since God that spared not his own Son, will deny nothing needful to the Salvation of those who serve him, and trust in him.

If any business of Necessity or Charity, calls you away before the end of this Exercise, dispatch it without Scruple, and return to your Closet; but avoid needless Interruptions, and spend the rest of the day, if conveniently you can, in acts of Charity, and in doing Good: as dispensing Alms, visiting the Sick, the Afflicted, the troubled in Mind, taking the part of the Oppressed, assisting the Widow and Fatherless in their Business, instructing the Ignorant, and the like, according to your opportunities and leisure.

But do not indulge vain Recreations, and as much as you can, avoid making unprofitable Visits; but if such are made to you, appear not morose, but receive them civilly and chearfully; for nothing becomes Religion worse than a *sour Behaviour*: only be careful of your Conversation, that its *levity* indispose you not, nor disturb the sedateness of your Mind: if at any time you have made any particular Resolutions, keep them in writing, and read them over on these Days; but rather keep your Christian Liberty

unintangled, as to positive Vows ; for a few rules often considered, and well observed, will advance you faster, in true Piety, than the multiplying Resolutions, little regarding how you keep them.

To your Evening Prayers, add petitions for God's accepting your Humiliation, and pardoning what is defective, and for Grace to live to God's Glory and your own Salvation : also pray for the conversion of Sinners, those especially that you have tempted to any Sin, or been tempted by, &c.

An Advertisement concerning Fasting.

FASTING is one of those Duties that belong to us as Sinners, or liable to Sin and Punishment ; it being an outward expression of Sorrow for some faults committed, or punishment feared and deserved ; for which ends all publick Fasts are appointed, and ought to be observed as strictly as is consistent with our Strength ; and little indispositions are rather to be endured, than publick order greatly slighted. But I mean by publick Fasts, only such as are particularly commanded by authority, not all those the Rubrick appoints, most of which, by general disuse, cease to be of obligation ; or if you think fit to keep up the observation of some or more of them, I think they are rather to be considered as private Fasts, which may be regulated by the following Rules, or any other, as found most conducing to the several ends of Fasting.

Fasting is a Duty of no self-excellency at all ; for in that sense, neither if we eat are we the worse, or if

if we forbear, are we the better; for meat commendeth us not to God; but it is a Means in order to an End, and in proportion to its Subserviency to the end or ends of Virtue and Piety, is *good, useful, and necessary*.

1. Fasting is *necessary*, and a duty of itself (even when through other Hindrances, extraordinary Devotion is not added to it) to all such persons as are inclined to *excess* in Eating, either as it respects the *quantity*, or *delicacy* of Meats and Drinks; for in this case, it is not only fit to break so detestable a habit by proper Mortifications, but to inflict some punishment on the Body and Senses, whose gratification by Gluttony, does so visibly and certainly cloud the Mind, and indispose it for the exercise of its noblest Faculties. Therefore so far as abstinence and fasting is of use to restrain or cure this, or any other irregular Appetite or Passion, so far it is a part of natural Religion, and of absolute Obligation.

2. It is *useful*, as it respects extraordinary Devotion; for which, more than ordinary Retirement is required; and consequently absence from publick Meals, where company is apt to dissipate the Thoughts, is of good use; but as to degrees of Fasting, it is to be left wholly to the choice of the Party, who alone is a proper Judge how far fasting is of advantage or disadvantage to the Intenseness and Life of their Devotions, and where it does not serve, especially where by fumes and vapours it rather defeats than answers these ends. In this case, it is so far from being a Duty, that 'tis a superstition

to think that God is pleased with such unreasonable pieces of Will-worship, no where commanded.

Fasting acquires a *real goodness*, when you deny your self a Meal, or your usual Food, to enable you to give to those who are in extream Necessity; or because you are called away to perform some Act of Charity, by which you exercise some Christian Virtue your self, and perform some real Good to another: in such cases, to neglect Meat and Drink, *that we may do the will of our Father in heaven*, is a truly noble occasion of Fasting, which elevates the Mind, and by the pleasure it receives, generally preserves the Body from being hurt by it; whereas the superstitious Fasts, and acted Sadness, and tedious Devotions of some ill-instructed, but devout Persons, leave their Minds sour, their Spirits low, their Health impaired; and instead of joy and admiration at the beauty and charms of true Virtue and Piety, they sink under the burden of a disordered Imagination, that represents God as a severe Master, and his Laws as arbitrary and difficult Obligations.

By fasting, I mean not a superstitious distinction of Meats, but a total abstaining from all Food, so far as health will bear: and here devout Persons are not to act by Example, but to judge for themselves; and because some Constitutions can without hurt, nay, with advantage to Health, fast long, they who are not so made, are not to think they must do so, any more than because a strong man can carry a great Weight, a weak one is to undertake to do it; for in such cases, it is Presumption and Folly, and not Religion, and we have no reason to expect God should preserve our
Health

Health and Life by Miracle, when we refuse to do it by the ordinary methods appointed for our Preservation ; therefore to those who cannot bear a *total fast* till Evening, let them take such a *proportion of Food*, and at such Hours, as will enable them to carry on their retirement with most advantage to their *spiritual Improvement* ; only observing one general Rule, that the provision of fasting days for your self or Family, be such as is least expensive, (that you may give the more to the Poor) and give less trouble in the preparing ; that your servants may not be more wearied to prepare a Fast than a Feast : which is what I have often disliked in the practices of the *Roman Church*, (beside the superstition of making a Fast consist in the distinction of Meats) their fasting Days being of fish and other things, much more expensive than plain Meat, and giving much more trouble, that they may by arts of Cookery, and variety of Dressing, make what is allowed as agreeable as may be. So that the Rich, for whom fasting is in all respects most proper, have little or no Mortification ; and the Poor, whose labour and hard fare makes it very improper, suffer a great deal by that restraint. To conclude : for the degrees or frequency of private days of Abstinence or Fasting, it is to be left to every one's Liberty ; nor are you to censure or give rules to others ; and for the sort of Food, let it be what will best contribute to Health, is cheap, simple, and easily provided.

Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance : for they disfigure their faces, that they may

may appear unto men to fast. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward, Mat. vi. 16.

But thou when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face : Ver. 17.

That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret : and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly, Ver. 18.

And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years ; which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers, night and day, Luke ii. 37.

Blow the trumpet in Sion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, Joel ii. 15.

Gather the people : sanctify the congregation : assemble the elders : gather the children and those that suck the breasts : let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet, Ver. 16.

C H A P. III.

Some Rules for the Implying of the Lord's Day.

1st, **R**ISE as early as your Health will bear, at least as early as on other Days ; by this I mean not to disallow the sleep of a full Refreshment, to prevent such Drowsiness as might otherwise render your private Retirement unprofitable, or your attendance on publick Duties irreverent and unedifying ; but you must not indulge unnecessary Sleep, which

which rather dulls than refreshes the Mind; but give the Lord's day an early welcome: In order to which, consider that no day is so well worth the improving, as this day: and will you, after the ill example of the Slothful and Profane, indulge your Ease, and make it only a rest to your Body? This is at best but to keep the Sabbath appointed for the Ox and Ass. Is it a Holy-day, and will you not employ it in holy Exercises? Is it the Lord's day, and will you take it to your self, and neglect his Service; forget you were created by his Power, redeemed by his Mercy, and are preserved and live by the wisdom of his Providence?

Reflections
at your first
Rising.

Short Ejaculations at Rising.

O LORD, by thy Resurrection, raise me into newness of Life, affording me all the means of Repentance.

O God of Peace, who didst bring again from the Dead the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, thro' the blood of the everlasting Testament, make me perfect in every good Work to do thy Will, working in me that which is well pleasing in thy Sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be Glory for ever.

O Thou, who upon this Day didst send down thy most holy Spirit on thy Disciples, withdraw not the same from me, but renew it daily in me more and more, till I come to thy heavenly Kingdom.

O how amiable are thy dwellings, thou Lord of hosts,
Psalm. lxxiv. 1.

My

My soul has a desire and longing to enter into the courts of our Lord, Ver. 2.

For one day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the courts of ungodliness, Psal. lxxxiv. 10.

2dly, Let not your dress be so negligent as to be remarkable and give offence; and on the other hand, let it not be so nice as to take up much time, or by its uncommonness attract the eyes of the beholders, and so be a snare to them as well as your self; generally avoid putting on new clothes on the Lord's day; it takes up so much time, and too much employs the Imagination. *The King's daughter is all glorious within.*

3dly, To your usual morning Exercise, add some Devotions relating to the Duties of the day.

1. Pray that all the world may be brought to the knowledge of the true God, and obedience of Christ; that his kingdom may be perfected and hastned; that the heathen may be given to his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the Earth to his possession, &c.

2. That all who profess to believe in Christ, may agree in the truth of his holy Word, and live in Unity and godly Love, and observe this holy Day suitably to its end and institution; pray that God would send faithful Labourers into his Vineyard; such as are truly taught of Him; and vested with a divine Authority and spiritual Mission, an inward love and call to the Duties, as well as an outward call to the Privileges of a Minister; that God would open to them a door of utterance, to speak the mysteries of Christ, not in the words which Mens wisdom teacheth, but which the holy

holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

3. Pray for those that hear, that God's Word may be received in Love, with Reverence and Submission; that it may be as seed sown in good Ground, bringing forth fruit unto eternal Life.

4. Pray that the blessing of God, and the powerful operation of his holy Spirit, may so accompany his Word, and the faithful dispensers of those sacred Treasures, as to make it effectual to the enlightning the Ignorant and the Erroneous, the convincing and converting the Sinner, the comforting and encouraging the Obedient and Broken-hearted, and the building up the whole Church of God, by true Faith and Holiness, unto Salvation, till all is perfected in Glory that shall have no end.

If more time remains, after your Morning Devotions are ended, imploy it in reading the holy Scriptures, or other books of Divinity, Prayer, and Meditation; but be sure so to order your private Devotions, Dressing, and the necessary affairs of your Family, that you may come early to the publick Assemblies, to join in the beginning of the Service, and do your endeavour that all under your Care, Children, Friends, and Servants, do the same.

As you go to Church, keep your thoughts on some devout Subjects; reflect how unworthy you are to be admitted into the House of God; and think of the great happiness and advantage of enjoying such Privileges, with the danger and ingratitude of slighting and abusing them; or repeat proper passages of Scripture; which method, if seriously practised, will
in

in great measure prevent the entertainment of such impertinent and worldly Thoughts, which once willingly admitted, will perhaps follow you to Church, and disturb your most solemn Devotions there.

If thou turn away from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thy own ways, or finding thy own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then thou shalt delight thyself in the Lord, Isa. lviii. 13.

O my God, I desire to dedicate this day to thy Worship and Service; to cast out of my Mind all vain and worldly Imaginations; to drive away those profaners of thy Temple; to sweep away the defilements of what is Evil; and according to my poor Ability, to garnish, at least with Sincerity and good Desires, the house and temple of my Heart; but, most merciful Lord, leave it not empty of thy Grace; abide with me, guide me with thy holy Spirit, and the evil ones will not dare to trouble me; but I shall be safe, full of delight, full of that joy and peace which surpasses the Understanding of all who know it not.

Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, Psal. cxxii. 1.

Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth, Psal. xxvi. 8.

I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now, in the presence of all his people, Psal. cxvi. 18.

In the courts of the Lord's house, Ver. 19.

Not forsaking the assembling your selves together, as the manner of some is — Heb. x. 25.

O my God, hear the united Prayers of thy Servants for each other, and pardon every Soul that is not prepared according to the preparation of the Sanctuary, and destroy us not, for the sake of our great High-Priest, the Lord Jesus.

As you enter into the Church, say :

L O R D, I am not worthy thou shouldst come under my Roof—God be merciful to me a Sinner.

Accept, O Lord, this day, the sacrifices of our Prayers, and Praises, [of our Alms and Oblations,] of our Souls and Bodies, in the virtue of that only perfect Sacrifice once offered, that Lamb without spot, that taketh away the Sins of the world.

Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools, Eccl. v. 1.

Enter the Church with a grave, composed Behaviour, taking such place as is allotted for you, or may be had without Disturbance ; not being ashamed or displeased if it happens to be among the meaner sort ; yet not affectedly choosing it, out of an ostentation of Humility, but indifferently, as it falls out, and is least troublesome to your self or others.

I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, enjoy the lowest privilege, than to dwell, or bear rule, in the tents of ungodliness, Psal. xiv. 10. For whose society is so wretched as God's Enemies, as such whose minds by Vice have lost the dignity of the rational Nature? Who so noble as God's Children,

Children and Friends, as souls elevated to a nearness to God by Virtue and divine Love? Glory not in the favours of the Wicked, nor ever be ashamed to be found in the company of God's Servants, lest their Lord and King be ashamed to own you in the great day of Recompence, when not the most Noble of this world, but the most Holy, shall shine with the greatest Glory.

My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons, Jam. ii. 1.

For if there come unto your assembly a man, with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, Ver. 2.

*And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, *or sit thou here under my footstool, Jam. ii. 3.*

Are ye not then partial in your selves? Ver. 4.

Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him? Ver. 5.

But ye have despised the poor——Ver. 6.

Having taken the place that was empty, or was left for you, offer an act of Adoration to God.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. (*Rev. iv.*) I adore and worship thee, O my God, who liveth for ever and ever: I dedicate my self to thee, I cast my self before thy Throne, to beg Pardon and Mercy, and the Grace of thy holy Spirit, for the sake of Christ Jesus.
Amen.

O Lord, enable both me thy unworthy Servant, and all who are this day met in thy Name, to offer unto thee our reasonable Service; to worship thee in Spirit and in Truth, according to thy Will and Word; to do it with Attention and Zeal, with minds purified from Sin, and freed of Prejudices.

O thou, who art the Way, the Truth, and the Life, who lightest every one that cometh into the World, guide all that seek thee this day in Sincerity, to a true discerning between the Spirit of God, and those doctrines that are according to Godliness; and such as Mens wisdom only teacheth, doctrines nowhere revealed, and duties nowhere commanded; and for which there is no promise of assistance to perform, or reward when performed.

IF you have more time before the publick Prayers begin, you may imploy your thoughts on such Meditations and Aspirations, as will arise from the following texts of Scripture, or any other you may choose; that so idle discourse and gazing about indispose you not for a truly devout and recollected Mind, in joining with the congregation in the common Prayers of the Church.

He that is of God beareth his word, John viii. 47.

But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, Mat. xv. 9.

Making the commandments of God of no effect, thro' your traditions, Ver. 6.

Who hath required these things at your hands? Isa. i. 12.

Believe

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Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone into the world, 1 John iv. 1.

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, Isa viii. 20.

Tho' we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed, Gal. i. 8.

If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, Prov. ii. 3.

Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God, Ver. 5.

Take heed how ye hear, Luke viii. 18.

THE parable of the Sower, applied to your self, may be sometimes a proper theme for your Meditations.

Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls, James i. 21.

As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby, 1 Pet. ii. 2.

He that is of God beareth God's word, John viii. 47.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip, Heb. ii. 1.

For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, Ver. 2.

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by those that heard him? Ver. 3.

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your selves, Jam. i. 22.

Blessed are they that bear the word of God, and keep it, Luke xi. 28.

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created, Rev. iv. 11.

Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints, Rev. xv. 3.

Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name! For thou only art holy, for all nations shall come and worship before thee, Ver. 4.

Thou shalt worship no other God: for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God, Exod. xxxiv. 14.

Ye shall make ye no idol or graven image, to bow down unto it, for I am the Lord your God, Levit. xxvi. 1.

For ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you, Deut. iv. 15.

Only ye heard a voice, Ver. 12.

They that worship God, must worship him in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him, John iv. 24.

Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them, Mat. xviii. 20.

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him, Psal. lxxxix. 7.

The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers, Psal. xxxiv. 15.

But the countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil, Ver. 16.

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, Prov. xv. 8.

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me, Mat. xv. 8.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, Mat. vii. 21.

My house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves, Mat. xxi. 13.

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, Acts xxvii. 7.

I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, Rev. i. 10.

Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay up in store as God hath prospered him, 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens, Lam. iii. 41.

Unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose — to put his name there — even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither shall ye come, Deut. xii. 5.

An Ejaculation before or after the Church Service.

IT is very meet, right, and my bounden duty and privilege, that I should at all Times, in all Places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father,

Almighty and everlasting God: therefore with Angels and Arch-angels, and all the company of Heaven, I laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy Glory; Glory be to thee, O Lord, most High.

WHEN the Minister begins the publick Service, leave off your private Meditations, and attend to the Exhortation: its design is to set out the end of publick Assemblies, and the Duties there to be performed; also to fix the mind, that the following Prayers may be more intent.

Join in the Confession with a truly penitent heart, and a deep sense of your own Sins, and the Sins of the Nation.

It is by no means proper to repeat the *Absolution* after the Minister, as some, who mean well, are apt to do. But apply it with a full Perswasion that those who perform the conditions, and are disposed by true Faith and a sincere Repentance, shall receive all the benefits and promises of the new Covenant, pardon of Sin, the assistance of the Spirit of God, the grace of Peseverance, and eternal Life: rejoice in God's goodness, who willeth not the death of a Sinner, but rather that he repent and live; and rejoice in the declaration of this his mercy on gospel Conditions, for the comfort and encouragement of sinful Creatures.

Both the *Absolution* and the *Blessing* do properly belong to the Minister alone. They are not therefore to be repeated after him by the People. In all the following

following Prayers do your endeavour to keep a steady Attention and a quiet Zeal, that you pray with the Spirit, and with the Understanding also: and whenever you perceive your Thoughts wander, be humbled for your infirmity, and recal them to their duty, by a short Aspiration; as, *Lord, help me*; or, *Lord, pity my weakness*; *Lord, pardon my infirmities*, or *my sin*, if the wandering was indulged; but stay not to reflect or examine what the wandering began at, how it came, or the like; for such reflections only prolong and increase the Fault; but neglect them, and make an immediate return to God, by a sense of your own Weakness, and a dependance on his Grace and Mercy.

It is of great use to have a full and clear understanding of the scope and comprehensive sense of the prayers you join in, that so you may be able to enlarge them into a sort of mental Paraphrase and Application, and join with them proper Aspirations, which is a great help to attention and seriousness.

You will be able to do this the better, if you sometimes read over some brief clear explication of the church Liturgy, and make it sometimes the subject of your Meditations, till you find you are able to join in it with spiritual Profit. This is a good direction to all, but it is most necessary to those who frequent Cathedral Service; for singing taking more time than a bare Repetition, without such useful Applications, their Devotion will grow flat, or their Minds be apt to wander or stand still. General Confession, Thanksgiving, and especially Intercession, being the proper and essential parts of publick Prayers, the publick
Offices

Offices are therefore very fitly so composed ; for what is particular to any single Person, either of Sin committed, grace desired, or mercy received, is best performed in the Closet and private Retirements : but as all Christians are concerned in the prosperity of Christ's Church, in the blessings of good Government, and the like, and will suffer more or less under the publick calamities of War, Famine, Pestilence, &c. therefore it is highly reasonable, that the Devotions of publick assemblies should be formed to these Purposes, since Christian charity obliges us to desire and promote the good of all the World so far as we are able ; and every good Mind can at least pray for all, though they may be able to assist but few.

I exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, and intercession, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, 1 Tim. ii. 1.

For kings, and all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, Ver. 2.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem ; they shall prosper that love thee, Psal. xxii. 6.

Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, Isa. lxii. 6.

And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth, Ver. 7.

Brethren pray for us, 1 Thess. v. 25.

That God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mysteries of Christ, Col. iv. 3.

Pray one for another, Jam. v. 16.

Praying

Praying always with all prayer and supplication for all saints, Eph. vi. 19.

Pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you, Mat. v. 44.

WHEN the Commandments are read, have a general humiliation for your own particular Sins forbidden by them, your omissions of those duties they imply, and heartily beg Grace to perform a more universal obedience to all God's Laws, as revealed in his holy Word, that all who hear the Law, may obey it; and that those who know not the Law, may be a law unto themselves.

Attend to the Scriptures with reverence, and apply them to your own self. Hear and receive them as the only and infallible Rule, for what you are to believe and what you are to do, in order to please God and save your Soul, begging illumination to understand them aright.

Go thro' the appointed portion of the *Psalms* with attention of Mind; the *imprecations* are not to be particularly applied, but considered prophetically, as a declaration that God will in due season defeat the *Counsels* and break the *Power* of all who are *enemies* to *Christ's kingdom* and government.

Hear the Sermons as from messengers of God, persons set apart for sacred Employment, and whose instructions are to be received in Love, and obeyed, if they bring their authority from God's word, or are reducible from it by easy and plain Consequences.

Be not offended at, and much less despise the Preacher, tho' he is not greatly learned, and wants
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the ornaments of Wit and Eloquence. If he is truly pious in his Life, and truly diligent and laborious in the duties of a Pastor, doing his best ; for as such he is more acceptable to God, and ought to be to every devout Soul, than those who abound in gifts of Knowledge, Utterance, fineness of Imagination, or other accomplishments of Wit and Learning, but are void of spiritual Graces ; such as Humility, contempt of the World, Purity, and Temperance, Charity, Patience, and the love of God. God's gifts are various, but his graces and the fruits of the Spirit are denied to none that earnestly desire and pray for them, and improve what they receive.

For the most part, keep to your own Parish ; and do not lightly and generally leave the congregation to which you belong by the established rules and customs of the Church : the pretence of following more profitable and spiritual Teachers, is often vain and false ; and 'tis much oftner gratifying Curiosity, or the pleasure of hearing an eloquent Discourse, or such Preachers, who by moving the passions, make us fancy we are made better and wiser ; though without our own repeated Reflections, this lasts no longer in the heart than the warmth it produces there ; and 'tis an ill sign, that that mind is not very spiritual, or has no true vital heat, that continually seeks and wants such artificial Fires, and can't from itself supply the defects of a plain, if pious Preacher.

But if your Minister is known to be immoral, or is notoriously slothful and careless in his Duties and Studies, I see no ill consequence of going generally to any neighbouring Church, where the Minister is
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of greater Piety, and is a more careful dispenser of God's word; for surely outward rules of human constitution are not to be preferred to the Glory of God, and real Edification: such ill Clergymen, if they can't be removed, may by such ways be differenced from the faithful Shepherds, that they may be ashamed and amended. But I advise you not to leave the Parish-Church intirely, both to shew you have a true spirit of Charity, and have no private Animosity; and also not to encourage their error, who think the virtue of Prayers and Sacraments depends on the worthiness of the Minister: *Judas* was sent with the twelve, and probably wrought Miracles as the rest; nor is it agreeable with God's Mercy and Love, to punish the Innocent for the faults of the Guilty.

But I mean not that private whispers should be taken for proof against any Man, much less a Clergyman; or that you may forsake him for little Infirmities, and less shining Virtues: but if your Minister is a known drunkard, lewd, or allows himself in wilful Ignorance, and neglects the duties of his Function, and feeds not the Flock, but gives himself into a worldly or sensual Spirit; in such cases, it is certainly both lawful and most to edification to go to any neighbouring Church, that is convenient, where they have the blessing of a more faithful Shepherd.

When the whole service is over, adore and bless God for the revelation of his will to Men; for the promises of Life and Immortality, and knowledge of the means of attaining them, thro' Jesus Christ.

After

After the Blessing add:

Now the Lord himself give us Peace always by all means: the Lord be with us all. Or, Now to the King Eternal, the Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be all Honour and Glory now and for evermore. *Amen.*

I will add here one Advertisement.

Be sure to avoid all *gazing about during the publick Service*; it is highly indecent: if you think you are above Learning, yet others are not: set not to them so ill an example. Some people seem so careful to pay and return the *salutations* of their Acquaintance, as if it was the most material part of their business at Church: this is a very ill custom, and which you are by no means to encourage by a compliance with it; therefore, except you can easily do it *before* or *after Sermon* or *Service*, do it not at all, but keep your eyes on your Book, or so disposed as not to see or give opportunities for those respects to be paid you, so, at least as to your self, you will by degrees cure that very improper and idle Civility.

As you go home, keep your thoughts recollected and calm, in an humble, chearful sense of the Blessings God has conferr'd on his Creatures, and a desire to live suitable to his Mercies.

When you come home, if you have time and opportunity, recollect the heads of the Sermon; especially recal what was most applicable to your self; as the informing you of any truth you did not so well understand; expounding any difficult text of Scriptures; or, in respect to practice, by reproving you for,

for, or discovering to you, any Fault; or inforcing any Duty you too much neglect; for this self application is the most useful method of hearing Sermons, tho' where the memory is good, it is very commendable to retain the whole, and is very necessary to the instructing others: but be sure to recollect if your behaviour has been outwardly grave, and inwardly devout and intent, and offer a short prayer for God's blessing on the Morning administration.

O Father of Mercy, pardon, I pray thee, and pity the infirmities, errors and ignorance of Mankind: enable us faithfully to apply the reproofs and instructions we have this day heard, to the increase of our Knowledge, and the amendment of our Lives: and grant that the Prayers and Praises of the Faithful, who seek the truth in Sincerity, sent up this day in the name of our common Redeemer, may by him be presented acceptable to thee, notwithstanding their Imperfections, Blemishes and Mistakes; that the church militant may so sanctify these holy Days, that its state triumphant may be hastened, where the Saints shall enjoy an eternal sabbath of Rest and Glory.

A T dinner, let your deportment be a composed Cheerfulness, with such temperance in the thankful use of Meat and Drink, as may not unfit you for the afternoon's attendance on the publick and private duties of a Holy-day.

And if you have opportunity, neglect not to repair to the publick assemblies with affection and reverence, as in the Morning.

After

After Evening-service, employ the rest of the day in acts of Devotion to God, or Charity to your Neighbour; read pious Books, be much in Thanksgiving and Meditations on the works of Creation and Redemption, the manifestation of God's Goodness, Wisdom and Power; also the particular Mercies enjoyed by this Nation and Church, your self or Friends, and any late deliverance or preservation: these are the proper meditations on days of Thanksgiving, with any other you find most effectual to dispose your heart to acts of Love to God, resignation to his Will, and a joyful sense of his Mercy and Goodness.

If you have opportunity, you may quicken your own Meditations by the Conversation of any religious Friend; good discourse being often of more advantage than much reading. Likewise, if occasion requires, make visits to sick, or disconsolate Persons, or perform any act of Charity, Friendship, and Mercy, without scruple.

Lastly, Enlarge your Evening devotions, by blessing God for all the benefits of that day's Instruction; rejoicing with the holy Angels, and giving glory to God for the return of any Soul converted from the error of his Ways; for any victory gained over Error or Ignorance, over Sin, the evil customs of the World, and snares of the Devil; for all the consolations any have received by the Ministers of the Word and Sacraments; and for the increase of brotherly Love and Christian Charity; for opening the understanding of the poor, simple, and humble ones, destitute of outward Helps; blessing God that any who

who sit in outward Darkness, as to the common means of Knowledge, have yet been filled with this inward and brighter Light, being taught of God to fear and love him.

Lastly, Examine your self, and conclude the day as at other times, going to rest with a holy joy for the comforts and advantages of one more holy Day; humbly desiring that the abuses, or not due improvements of such opportunities, may not rise in judgment against you, or any that enjoy them.

I further recommend singing Psalms, as a very proper exercise for the Lord's day; but be careful in the manner of doing it, in the Church or at Home, that it be with a devout attention to the Sense of the Words, and not to the grace and manner of Singing only.

I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also, 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

Sing ye praises with understanding, Psal. xlvii. 7.

Before you begin, use some such Ejaculations as these:

My heart is fixed, O my God, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise, Psal. lvii. 7.

For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds, Ver. 10.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, let thy glory be above all the earth, Ver. 11.

O praise the Lord, for it is a good thing to sing praises unto our God, yea a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful, Psal. cxlvii. 1.

O sing praises unto his name, for it is lovely, Psal. cxxxv. 3.

If you have a family, to your usual Devotions, add the Reading in some plain and useful Books, or catechizing the more ignorant and younger sort; but let it be done before the rest of the Family, whose years perhaps, more than their Knowledge, sets them above that Discipline.

There are many excellent Expositions of the Catechism, which you may use to direct or assist you in this Exercise; enlarging as you are capable, or find needful, for the rendering the Instruction more suitable to the capacities of the Instructed.

'Tis also a very commendable and useful Practice, to call sometimes one child or servant, sometimes another, to give an account of what they remember, or have learnt that day from the word of God, or discourse of his Ministers, especially such truths or duties that are most necessary to be known or done in order to a holy life here, and eternal life hereafter.

Where no Chaplain is kept, nor the Master of the family willing to perform this part of his Duty, doubtless the Mistress may supply that neglect to her Children, and that part of the family composed of her own Sex; appointing the others to read such Books as are proper for their Instruction, and sending them to some pious Minister to examine their Improvements, and add such Instructions as their ignorance makes necessary. These are the proper employments for the Lord's day, avoiding what you can all needless Work, Business, or Recreation, except such as are properly works of Necessity or Mercy; for 'tis not a scrupulous and superstitious, but a

rational, devout, and profitable observation of this holy Day, that I recommend.

The end of all religious observances, is to know and do the will of God; and tho' a careful and strict improving of the Lord's day has been found, by constant experience, a very proper, if not necessary means to promote true Piety; yet wherever the end is obtained, you must not judge any, tho' they differ a little in the use of the means, provided none of those means are neglected that God has appointed. For such are not left to our Choice, but from their divine Institution become duties of necessary and indispensable Obligations, not to be knowingly and wilfully neglected, without Sin and Guilt.

Before I end this Chapter, I will add one caution concerning two different Extrems, into which some, who pretend to more than ordinary Devotion, are very apt to run: the one placing most of their religion in their constant attending on the publick Prayers, with a great indifferency to Sermons, as almost a needless expence of time; the other, in almost as great an indifferency for the publick Prayers, except accompanied with a Sermon, making hearing much the greatest duty of Religion: whereas, in truth, there is no religion in the bare performance of the one or the other, but as they may be a proper Means, and when directed to a right End.

To dispute which of these is preferable, is as idle, as to argue which is most necessary for Life, Food, or Air, since both are absolutely; for of what value can those Prayers be which are hardly understood, and pronounced with very little Faith or Love? For

Faith (that is, a true scripture rational Faith, arising from Knowledge) comes from Hearing; or how can we love what we know not and rarely entertain our thoughts about, but by Meditation, Hearing, or Reading? For all these are, in their Seasons, necessary to convey to the understanding great thoughts of God, as our Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, and to help us to see a wisdom and beauty, a mercy and goodness in the dispensation of the Gospel Covenant, to discover the beauty and charms of every moral Virtue, and the deformity and fatal consequences of every Vice.

To think we serve God by our Prayers, or by our Hearing, is a superstitious Error, farther than as it contributes to the uniting us to him by purifying our Hearts and Lives; and such who know most in order to this end will, to be sure, pray best, with the most solid and lively Faith and inflamed Love, and I fear there are not many so far advanced in Knowledge, or perfected in Charity, as neither to want instruction or encouragement in their Christian Race. I have often observed, that those who wanted instruction most, have valued the opportunities of increasing it least; and such as have least business, and could loiter away several hours every Day, yet thought half an hour a great deal to employ in hearing a Sermon. And 'tis a great error for those who want not, or rather think they want not instruction themselves, to express a contempt for Sermons; that will encourage young and ignorant people to do the like, and their superficial knowledge will necessarily

be accompanied with as superficial, or else a superstitious Devotion.

By this I mean not that you should run to all the Sermons within your reach, as if it was a duty of Obligation; but only that you should, as your affairs and circumstances easily admit, without Offentation, thankfully embrace proper opportunities of Instruction, and attend them with Reverence and Attention; for both Prayers and Preaching are appointed as means to perfect us in the love of God, and in obedience to his Will; and both are good so far as they promote that End; and if they do not, they are both the sacrifice of Fools; for *whoever cometh to God, must believe that he is* (and that is more than barely saying, I believe) *and that he is the rewarder of them who diligently seek him*; and one quarter or half an hour employed in Prayer, with a mind and heart rightly prepared, shall be both more effectual to our real Sanctification, as well as more acceptable to God, who searches and requires the Heart, than the many hours of such, as for want of a well informed Understanding, or right disposition of their Will and Affections, find almost as little pleasure as profit by their Devotions; but go on many years in a dead Formality or ignorant Superstition, and are apt both to value themselves, and judge of the Virtue and Piety of all others, by the zeal and scrupulous niceness they shew in the constant attendance they give at all the hours of the publick Prayers; tho' it produce no other virtue or perfection suitable to such extraordinary external Devotion.

A Thanksgiving for the Lord's Day.

BLESSED and glorious Lord God, the Creator, and Preserver, and Governor of all things, my Saviour and Deliverer, and continual Benefactor; I acknowledge, I admire, I adore thy infinite Excellencies and Perfections; and let all the Creatures in heaven and earth say *Amen*. Blessed and hallowed be thy holy name for all thy Mercies over all thy Works, in particular to the children of Men; to the Christian Church, by the Gospel Revelation and Covenant; to this Church and Nation, for its Light and Liberty, its Prosperity and Defence; for all good Magistrates and Ministers in Church and State, from the highest to the lowest; for all the mercies vouchsafed to any pious Man or Women; for the success of any good undertaking; for the prosperity of the Good, and the deliverance of the Afflicted; for all thy blessings to my Friends, Relations, Enemies.

More especially I render Thanks to thee, my most gracious God, for innumerable favours conferred upon me, thy poor Creature, and most unworthy; for my Being, for my Reason, and for all other endowments and faculties of Soul and Body; for thy continual care and watchful providence over me, from the beginning of my Life, and thro' the whole course of it; for all the happy circumstances of my Birth and Education; for the pious care of my dear Parents, and of all others who had the charge of me in my tender Years; for thy unwearied patience towards me after so many and so great Provocations;

and

and for thy merciful and wonderful preservation of me from innumerable Dangers, to which I have been expos'd all my Life.

I will still hope in thy goodness, O Lord, who hast been my trust from my Youth; by thee have I been holden up ever since I was born, my praise shall be continually of thee.

Above all, I adore thy tender Mercy and Compassion to me, and all Mankind, in sending thy only Son into the world to redeem us from Sin and Misery, and by suffering in our Nature, and dying in our Stead, to purchase for us eternal Life. I bless thee for the light of thy glorious Gospel; for the knowledge and sense of my Duty towards thee; for delivering me from Temptations too hard for me, and supporting me under many; for the direction, and assistance, and comforts of thy holy Spirit; for restraining me by thy Grace, and reclaiming me from the ways of Sin and Vanity; and for all the gracious communications of thy Goodness, whereby thou hast inclined my heart to love and fear thee, and enabled me in any measure to do thy Will.

For these, and all other thy blessings and favours to me and to all thy Creatures, which are more than can be numbred, I render unto thee, most gracious God, all possible Praise and Thanks, by Jesus Christ my blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

C H A P. IV.

Some Advices and Devotions relating to the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the better to dispose you to a frequent and devout Attendance on that part of the Christian Worship, if you live in a Place that affords you that Consolation and Advantage.

BUT when I suppose and allow of frequent Communion, I take it for granted, you are duly instructed in the obligations that attend it, and live in a good degree suitable to them.

To explain my self a little more fully: I mean,

1. That you are competently instructed in all the essential parts of the Christian Doctrine, and the Christian Covenant.
2. That you have been Confirmed, or if for want of opportunity, that has been omitted, yet you have done all on your part that answers the end and design of that Institution; that is, that what was promised at your Baptism, you have made your own *Act*, by a free and rational choice, and are on mature deliberation, heartily willing to take upon you Christ's easy yoke; to submit to, and obey all the laws of his Kingdom and Government; to resign your self to do or suffer whatever God commands or inflicts, and to place your whole confidence in his Mercy and Protection; so that if you were now in an unbaptized State, you would
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willingly be made a disciple of Christ by Baptism, on the *conditions* the Scriptures have proposed: for if you find not this disposition in you, you are not fit for Confirmation, or the Communion; it being the will and hearty consent that seals the Covenant, and not the outward form of Baptism; if afterwards the will withdraw the Consent, and secretly wishes it was not so engaged, in such a case Baptism shall only aggravate the guilt and punishment of the nominal Christian; therefore be sure to make this Examination seriously.

1st, If you find your self truly willing (for till you are so, you had better defer your Confirmation or Communion) *to renounce the Devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful desires of the Flesh*; and consider if you rightly understand what is meant by these Renunciations.

2^{dly}, Consider, if you are truly resolved to endeavour after a full and impartial obedience to God's revealed Will and Commandments; that is, sincerely purposing, and endeavouring, so far as you know, to avoid all that is forbid, and to do all that is commanded by God's Word.

And, 3^{dly}, that you believe the holy Scriptures and what is in them revealed of God; of his Nature, Will, Promises, and Threatnings, &c.

In short, that you receive the word of God, that is, the books of the Old and New Testament, as a divine Revelation, and consequently the standard of divine Truths; the rule of your Faith, and director of your Life and Manners; submitting your Understanding and Will to its plain Decisions, with respect

both

both to your opinions in points of Doctrine, your Practice and Worship; and taking it as the rule of your Obedience, and truest system of all moral Virtues.

When you have proceeded thus far, and find you have a competent knowledge of the Christian Religion, and the duties it requires of you, then go on,

Secondly, To examine how you have lived since you came to the exercise of your

Reason and Free-will; how far you have kept or broke the vows of your Baptism; have confessed and lamented the errors and sins of your Childhood and Youth; what sorrow and contrition you have had in proportion to your Offences.

As a means to the doing this seriously and wisely, it is necessary to allow large portions of time for it before your Confirmation, or first Communion; or if you have as yet gone on in a careless, customary form of Preparation, rectify that Error, and begin now as if you had never yet solemnly renewed your baptismal Vow: and if you are not yet Confirmed, let this preparation be ended with a serious Confirmation, if an opportunity is offered; for no considerate person can approve the confirmation of Children, which quite destroys the end and benefit of that Institution, which supposes the person confirmed arrived at a competent Understanding of what they take on themselves to perform; and that they are fit to be admitted to all the privileges of a Christian, as opportunity presents.

By

By large portions of Time, I mean, that for some weeks before your first Communion, you employ an hour every day, (or as much time as your necessary affairs will permit) in reading proper books of Instruction, and in a careful and exact going thro' the forementioned Examination; that so the judgment you make of your self may be solid and impartial.

That during that time, you keep two or three fasting Days, at some distance from one another; and that you live as much retired as your circumstances will allow; at least be very careful to keep your Mind in a calm, recollected frame; avoiding needless Recreations and Conversation, being more frequent than ordinary in the exercises of Devotion, and in reading the holy Scriptures; and from the observations you make from them, forming good Purposes, and considering what are the properest means to make them effectual.

When you have thus conscientiously and carefully gone thro' a solemn and considerate Examination and Preparation, continue to hold regular and frequent communion with the Church to which you belong, by established Rules and Laws, and avoid all needless Separation, which is *never lawful*, but when the Church *practises* and imposes things *contrary* to the rules of God's Word.

But when I recommend this, I take for granted, that you remain faithful to your Resolutions and Endeavours of living suitable to your Christian Profession, repenting of, and striving against those infirmities which your Temper, manner of Life, or former ill Habits, make you most apt to be surprized by;

by; still reaching after, and longing to attain to greater Perfection; being desirous not only to conquer your sinful Habits, but every tendency to what is Evil, and to encrease in the love of God and zeal of good Works.

For if after your solemn Resolutions, you fall into a deliberate and wilful state of Sin, especially if the repetition of Sins tend towards Habits, and brings scandal on your Profession; in such cases your Repentance must be more solemn and particular, and nothing must be thought sufficient short of Amendment, which implies Restitution, where the nature of the Injury, and ability of the Injurious, admit of that Satisfaction, not only of Goods, but of Truth, if you have imposed on any by a Lie; or if any one has suffered in their reputations by your Calumnies, or has been seduced into any kind of Errors in matters of Opinion, or matters of Fact, by your wilful Falshood and Prevarications: for since we can hardly cheat any body of any thing so valuable as Truth, I see not why all such as have by writing, or other ways, imposed falshood on one or more, should not be obliged in conscience to do all they can to repair the injury they have done their Neighbour, and endeavour that the Satisfaction may extend as far as the Mischief.

But forasmuch as in such Cases, many are apt to misjudge for themselves, and run into the extremities of Indulgence and Scrupulosity; its safest, and will afford more quiet to your Conscience, to follow the advice of some prudent and pious Minister, to whom is committed the word of Reconciliation, both in the manner

manner and the measure of Restitution and Satisfaction, and in the sincerity of your Repentance; as also how long you should abstain from the Communion, and what other acts of Repentance are fit to be practised in order to the trial of your Sincerity, that so when you are re-admitted to partake of the great Peace-offering, it may be with Comfort, and humble belief that you are in a reconciled and justified State.

By the neglect of this, many grow into a state of hardened Presumption on some cold general sorrow for past Sins, and weak purposes of Amendment, which are seldom effectual; or else fall into terrible perplexities of Mind; which sometimes end in Melancholy and Despair.

The best habitual preparation, is a *holy Life*; the best disposition of Mind, is *Humility, Love*, and a *sincere Heart*, with ardent desires not only to have the Punishment of your Sins remitted, but to be delivered from the *Pollution* of them, with a steady resolution of yielding *universal Obedience* to all God's Commands; and so far as properly imitable, following the example of Christ; keeping your will in an entire submission to God, both in doing or suffering, so far as he has revealed his will in his Word, or by his Providence; and from a sense of your Weakness and Dependency, praying earnestly that he will work in you both to will, and to do his good Pleasure; that he will rule and defend you, as your King; teach you by his Word and Spirit, as your Prophet; and save you by the merit of his Suffering and Intercession, as your great high Priest and Sacrifice.

These,

These, and such like, are suitable dispositions for the worthy keeping this holy Feast, coming in a Spirit of Obedience to that command, *This do in remembrance of me: To shew forth Christ's death till he comes*; and not from a presumption of any Merit, or Self-excellency, but with a sense of your own Wants, and faith and hope in God's Mercy, which will kindle in your heart divine Charity, or the love of God, both with respect to his essential Perfections, and his free Bounty to us, to whom we owe our Being, and consequently all that we are or have, to whom we must return all the Glory for ever. *Amen.*

But tho' the habitual course of a holy Life, and a right temper of Mind, is the best and safest Preparation, without which all other is of no value; yet the actual is not to be generally and wilfully neglected. What I call actual preparation consists in,

1. Examination of what has past since your last Communion, what faults have been committed or reformed, what duties are neglected or improved.
2. Some more than ordinary retirement for Reading, Meditation, and Prayer.
3. More liberal Alms, and seeking the opportunities for good Works.

But tho' I generally recommend this, yet as to the degree of it, I would not be understood to encourage scrupulous niceness, but only a pious readiness to Devotion and good Works, as time and opportunity will admit; for whoever is constant in the daily Examination of themselves, in order to rectify what is found amiss or defective, will have much less to do before a Communion day; by which means their exercises

ercises of Love and Praise will be the more vigorous and delightful; for generally the great backwardness many have in approaching this holy Solemnity, arises from their unwillingness to look into their Hearts and Lives, after long neglects of Examination, and their fears of finding much to amend, and their thinking themselves obliged to greater care in their Conversation than what the common ties of their Christianity oblige them to.

Another cause of the long omission of this part of Christian Worship is, the tying themselves to such an extraordinary length in their forms of Devotion, which are more than the weakness of their Love to holy exercises can go thro' with Attention and Pleasure: this makes the customary returns of this solemnity unwelcome to many, who profess to be religious, yet perform its obligations more like a Task and Burden, than a Delight and Privilege.

Nor could I well understand why so much retirement and strictness is by many thought necessary before the Sacrament, and so little after, except they think the worthy receiving consists principally in an artificial raising of the Affections, and fruitless desires of Reformation; and then, as soon as that part is over, and the scene shut, they think themselves no more obliged to wear those uneasy habits of Piety and Sobriety, till by some solemn occasion they are called on again to repeat the same Performance.

Tho' even for this end of exciting a sensible Devotion, we may by oppressing our spirits with an excessive number of Forms, put out the fire, instead of raising the flame, which is never pure and perfect,

but

but when it comes from Love, and with the full and sincere consent of the will and of the understanding:

Or it may be in some the effects of a dangerous Superstition, not enough reflected on; implying, that after Confession and Absolution, and a supposed pardon by this seal of the Sacrament, all our debts are remitted, and that we may begin on a new Account; but this is very ungrateful, were it true, with respect to God, as it is very foolish in respect to our selves, to take so much pains to get a Pardon, and to be after that so careless in performing the Conditions, and preventing the Forfeiture, and so relapsing into as bad or worse condition than before.

Some Scriptures relating to the Holy Sacrament, and the preceeding Qualifications of Faith, Repentance, and Charity, &c.

FOR I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night he was betrayed, took bread; 1 Cor. xi. 23.

And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you: This do in remembrance of me, Ver. 24.

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me: 1 Cor. xi. 25.

For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come, Ver. 26.

And

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, Acts xx. 7.

And they continued stedfast in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread, and in prayer, Acts ii. 42.

Of Self-Examination.

BE ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear, 1 Pet. iii. 15.

Examine your selves whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup: 1 Cor. xi. 28.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body, Ver. 29.

For if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged, Ver. 31.

I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies, Psal. cxix. 59.

O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day, Psal. cxix. 97.

Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word, Ver. 148.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayst observe to do according to all that is written there-

in; for then thou shalt make thy ways prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success, Josh. i. 8.

But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived, 2 Tim. iii. 13.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, Ver. 14.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, thro' faith which is in Christ Jesus, Ver. 15.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; Ver. 16.

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, Ver. 17.

Meditate upon these things, give thy self wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all, 1 Tim. iv. 15.

Give diligence to make your calling and election sure, 2 Pet. i. 10.

Of the Benefits of the New Covenant, and the Conditions required.

FAITH in God's Promise thro' Christ.

And as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive, 1 Cor. xv. 22.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, John iii. 16.

For

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For God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world thro' him might be saved, Ver. 17.

To him give all the prophets witness, that thro' his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins, Acts x. 43.

Neither is there salvation in any other, Acts iv. 12.

There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. ii. 5.

He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, Heb. vii. 25.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me, Joh. xiv. 6.

And this is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, John xvii. 3.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 11.

Of Repentance, and Resolutions of new Obedience.

I*F any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, 1 John ii. 1.*

And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world, Ver. 2.

Him has God exalted with his own right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, and to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins, Acts v. 31.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our selves and the truth is not in us, 1 John i. 8.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, Ver. 9.

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, Acts iii. 9.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy up him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon, Isa. lv. 7.

If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, to do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die, Ezek. xviii. 21.

All his transgressions that he hath committed shall not be mentioned unto him, Ver. 22.

Who so keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him, 1 John ii. 5.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples, John xv. 18.

Of Thankfulness for the Death of Christ.

BUT thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 57.

But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, Rom. v. 8.

For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life, Ver. 10.

What

What shall I render unto God for all his benefits towards me? Psal. cxvi. 12.

I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord, Ver. 13.

Of Christian Charity one towards another, in order to a worthy Communion.

IF there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother, Deut. xv. 7.

Thou shalt surely give him, and thy heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, Ver. 10.

As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith, Gal. vi. 10.

Be ye kind one to another, and tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you, Eph. iv. 32.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, Mat. ix. 14.

But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses, Ver. 15.

Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

IF you have opportunity and leisure, end your examinations on Friday or Saturday, that you may have time on the Lord's day morning for more exale-

ed acts of Devotion; as Adoration, Praise, Contrition, Love; and be sure to rise as early as your health will permit.

After your usual Deyotion, read or meditate on subjects suitable to the approaching Solemnity: be particularly careful to keep your affections and passions still and composed, and your mind in a meek, humble, and recollected frame.

Avoid all disputes and business, worldly thoughts and discourse, deferring them to another Season, except an immediate unforeseen accident requires dispatch; then submit, and do what necessity at that time makes the more reasonable Duty; but endeavour to preserve the same calm disposition of Mind, looking on such interruptions as the marks of your present servitude and state of Labour in God's Vineyard, longing for that happy state when, your servitude being accomplished, you shall be taken into the liberty of children in your Father's house, the new *Jerusalem*, and keep an eternal sabbath of Joy and Peace.

During the administration of the holy Sacrament, endeavour to keep up a fixed attention and composedness of Mind, silently joining in the Prayers, and making suitable applications to your self; but avoid all artificial force to move the Passions to your self, or to repeat or excite desires that come not from a full consent of your Will: for whatever arises not from the Heart, is a dead sacrifice, unacceptable to God, tho' we may deceive our selves or the world by it.

The following particulars, or some of them, may, as Time and your Devotion invites, imploy your thoughts

thoughts either in your closet in the morning of your Communion, or at the holy table during the intervals of the Administration.

1. Humbly confess your unworthiness of the divine Presence and Favour. Beg pardon for your past defective Communion and broken Vows; the imperfections of your Knowledge; the weakness of your Faith; the partiality of your Repentance; the narrowness of your Charity: the coldness of your Thanksgivings. Reflect on your remaining Corruptions, those infirmities that are most customary, and you are aptest to fall into, either by omitting what you are convinced is your duty to do, or committing what you ought not to do, and have resolved against.

Such thoughts seriously applied, so as to penetrate the Heart, and make you sensibly feel the secret wounds of Sin, will produce true Contrition and Humility: but if you only carelessly and in a customary manner, run over your Sins in your Memory, with a forced dislike to them, and a notion that all are Sinners, and therefore little shame or sorrow is needful for what is so natural; it will only harden you in your Sins, and neither bring forth that godly sorrow that worketh true Repentance, nor strengthen your endeavours of future Reformation.

2. Consider the evil and malignity of Sin in this representation and memorial of Christ's Sufferings, by which God, in so amazing a manifestation of his Wisdom and Mercy, Justice and Purity, declares his love to his Creatures, and hatred of Sin, and its inherent opposition to his Holiness and our Happiness.

To destroy Sin in the power of it, was one great end and design of Christ's appearance in the Flesh; that his life, and doctrine might be our Rule, and his death and passion our Propitiation; and yet how stupidly averse are many who are called by his Name, to part with those Sins which he came to destroy, and which will end in Death, as their proper wages, if continued in?

3. Exercise faith and confidence in God's Mercy, as manifested from his Essence, and the eternal perfection of his Nature; for to doubt of the goodness of God is as impious as to doubt of his Being; since it is not more evident that there is a God, than it is that he is, and must needs be, perfect in Goodness and Mercy.

Texts proving the Goodness of the Divine Nature.

THERE is none good but one, that is God, Mat. xix. 17.

Thou art good, and doest good, Psal. cxix. 68.

The Lord is loving unto every man, and his mercy is over all his works, Psal. cxlv. 9.

He giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, Jam. i. 5.

He maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, Mat. v. 45.

O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men, Psal. xxxi. 19.

There

There is mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared,
Psal. cxxx. 4.

Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, Neh. ix. 17.

And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, Exod. xxxiv. 6.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him, 1 John iv. 16.

Be ye therefore merciful, for your heavenly Father is merciful, Luke vi. 36.

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy, Mic. vii. 18.

BUT forasmuch as the belief of the goodness of God's Nature, does not free the minds of guilty Creatures from fears and doubts of themselves; that is, how far they may have forfeited all right to it, or how far God's perfect Justice and Purity may intercept Mercy from the Criminal; therefore to strengthen your faith in the divine Goodness, reflect on God's Promises, on the nature of the covenant in Christ, which holds forth pardon of Sins and Reconciliation, sanctifying Grace, and eternal Life; and this being added to the natural notion of God's Mercy, will remove all servile Fear, and secure the comfort and humble assurance of all who by Faith and Repentance put themselves within the conditions of the new Covenant.

For

For I delivered unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures, 1 Cor. xv. 3.

God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. 19.

For he hath made him to be a sin-offering for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, Ver. 21.

In whom we have redemption thro' his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, Col. i. 14.

After he had offered one sacrifice for sins, he for ever sat down at the right hand of God, Heb. x. 12.

For by one offering, he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified, Ver. 17.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, Rom. viii. 1.

If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye, thro' the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live, Ver. 13.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. v. 24.

For sin shall not have the dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. vi. 14.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins, Mat. i. 21.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15.

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. ii. 5.

That

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That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, John iii. 15.

And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world, 1 John ii. 2.

As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe in his name, John i. 12.

For Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

FROM some of these texts, or the like, you may draw exercises of faith on the perfection and all-sufficiency of Christ's Sacrifice and Intercession to reconcile you to God, and to quiet those doubts that may arise from the uncertain conceptions you may have of what is due to the divine Justice, and the purity of God's Nature, and as he is the Governor of his Creatures.

For in the holy scriptures he has so plainly revealed on what condition he will pardon and save Sinners, that none can mistake but from an indulged Ignorance, or the disorder of a melancholy Constitution; so that all that remains on your part, is to know your own sincerity and right to the Promises; for God is faithful, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

If you have more time, you may review the conditions of the Covenant you made on your part at your Baptism and Confirmation; observe how you keep

keep them, repeat your hearty consent to them, and pray for divine Assistance, and be assured, if your Repentance is sincere, and your Faith works by Love, and inclines you to a chearful and willing obedience to God's holy Law, God will be faithful to his Promises, in granting Pardon, Grace and Glory ; and I can't give you a better test to prove your Sincerity by, than the finding your heart as earnest in the begging Grace and Sanctification, as pardon and freedom from Punishment.

1. When the Bishop or Pastor approaches with the holy Symbols, pray for God's special presence and benediction to that his own Ordinance, for Grace to receive them worthily ; and that you may be a partaker not only of the outward signs of Bread and Wine, but of the inward spiritual Grace, signified and sealed by them : even all the benefits of the new Covenant purchased by Christ's Death, and confirmed by his Resurrection, as the only Mediator between God and Man.

2. Bless God for these inestimable Gifts, and offer to him the merit of that great sacrifice for your self and all the World, to obtain all that is needful for you.

3. After you have received, pray for the divine Assistance to perfect in you the spiritual Life, to enlighten your Understanding, and sanctify your Heart ; to add what christian and moral Virtues you want, and perfect those already begun ; in particular, mention those you find most defective ; as also pray for strength against such Temptations by which you perceive you are easiest overcome. This is a time of Mercy,

Mercy, so make all your complaints to a reconciled Father, desiring that the power of Christ's Death may destroy all Sins in you, that you may be what God will approve, whatever best pleases him.

Go on to return thanks for the many Mercies you enjoy ; especially such as are spiritual ; the conquest of any Sin, or improvement in any Virtue ; also for the Honour, Benefit and Comfort of all your past Communion, and all other blessings to your self or others.

4. Desire the union of your prayers with all true Christians, especially all such who duly celebrate this divine Institution ; for all Christian Assemblies ; for all united to Christ, the only head of his Church, by Faith, and to each other in Love ; praying that their sincerity may be accepted, their errors pardoned ; and that all who truly love God may share in all the benefits of Christ's Sufferings and Obedience. Do not omit to make these general Intercessions for all Men, some part of your Sacramental Devotions ; being more or less particular, as the publick state of the World, or your own Country, requires.

You may add also what is proper with respect to the circumstances of your private Friends and Relations.

The number of Communicants being very different in different places and times, you must dispose your Prayers and Meditations accordingly, enlarging on any of the foregoing Particulars, as the time permits, and the disposition of your Mind inclines.

If

At If you use the help of Books to regulate and furnish matter for your Prayers, let them not be long continued Forms, which are often hurried over as a necessary part of the Service, and breed confusion and disorder in the Mind; and such forms being sometimes too long, sometimes too short, the thoughts grow confused, or idle and wandering.

The Communion Service, of which almost every particular expression is most excellent and well chosen, takes in all the necessary parts of Devotion proper for the Communion; and for the intervals that lie during the collection for the Poor, distribution of of the Bread and Wine, &c. if your own thoughts are not ready to furnish matter for intent, affectionate, and rational Meditations and Prayers, fit your self with such a collection of proper books as best suits your own Heart, and as you can join in with most Affection and Delight; and let these be rather a collection of short Sentences and Ejaculations ranked under the several heads of Adoration, Confession, petition for Grace, acts of Love, Resignation, Intercession, and giving of Thanks, than long continued Forms, where some things may affect, others check your Devotions, as not suiting your Heart or agreeing with your apprehensions; therefore collect what you like out of them, and leave the rest, casting your prayers into small Divisions or Sentences, and stop a little at each Period, till you feel the truth you repeat, that so your Heart may join with your Tongue; and where you find any one thought or particular affect you much, let your mind freely enlarge, and stay on it as long as that warmth and your atten-

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tion lasts, and then go to the next; and be not concerned if you go not thro' all the parts of your prescribed Devotions, which may either be supplied at home in your Closet, or, for those who are frequent partakers of this most delightful part of the Christian Worship, what is omitted at one time, may be taken at another.

Thus by following the motion of the Heart, and a due and humble use of this liberty of Spirit, your Communion will be more pleasant and profitable, and better answer all the ends of true Devotion, in promoting a spiritual and internal Life.

Avoid intangling your thoughts with the unintelligible Definitions some books give of this sacred Institution; rest in the scripture Expressions, and read those books that are plainest and most practical: 'tis evident from the scripture, that 'tis on our part a commemoration or remembrance of the death of Christ; and a communication of the benefits we receive thereby; and on God's part, a seal of the new Covenant, and of his Promises to all who perform the Conditions; it is also a proper season for Prayer and acts of Piety, and consequently the exercise of many Graces, which is a mean of their increase and growth. And as human authority has no right to impose their explanations as the rule of your Faith, so neither do you impose your interpretations and sense on others, but judge with Modesty and Humility for your self with Charity as to others, both as it respects their opinions and forms, or less frequently attending on this ordinance; provided still the essentials are observed in a due conformity to the first Institution,

stitution, and that long neglects are not indulged from bad or false Principles or Practices ; 'tis attaining the end, the purifying the Heart and Life, that makes a good Christian, and not resting in the means, how excellent soever. To conclude :

The outward part, the Bread and Wine, are visible, and may be determined of the inward. Grace is spiritual, and only spiritually discerned ; and the best instructions for attaining this spiritual Knowledge, are the holy Scriptures, Meditation, Prayer, and the love of God.

Come home with an humble chearfulness, expressing good Will and Charity to all, as you have opportunity, praying for grace to live suitably to such Mercies, imploying the remaining part of the day in religious Exercises, especially in acts of Faith, and Hope, and divine Charity.

It may be plainly enough gathered from holy Scripture, and is clear from the purest writings of the primitive Church, that the Lord's Supper was a frequent, if not a constant part of publick Worship ; at least of the more solemn service of the Lord's day : now were this custom revived and generally expected, I fear, except men could be made more inwardly holy and virtuous, it would have little more effect than the other parts of religious Worship ; that is, in time turn into a meer matter of Form, and compliance to Custom ; and men would come as unprepared to the holy Table, as they do now to Prayers and Sermons ; yet I can't see any inconveniency, but think rather it may be of great use and improvement to devout Minds, to keep a spiritual Communion

nion when the opportunities for the sacramental ones are long wanting, or when you have any real Hindrance; or if out of Modesty, Humility, Scruple, or other reasonable Consideration, you abstain from communicating at every opportunity that presents.

If you approve this Advice, you may imploy that time you have on the Lord's day Morning, in a spiritual commemoration of Christ's Death, ordering your Meditations, Reading, and Devotions, suitably to those Subjects beforementioned, making such alterations as are proper.

This would not only be an exercise agreeable to the Lord's day, but would dispose your Mind and prepare your Heart to a more willing and affectionate, as well as more frequent attendance on this Institution in publick.

It would remove your needless Fears, and teach you a more ready, intent, and profitable manner of disposing and regulating your Devotions, and how to make those suitable applications as are most agreeable to your own Circumstances.

In particular, this advice is proper for young Persons, whose frequency of communicating had better grow by degrees, and be their own Choice and earnest Desire, than to run into it all at once, and as a matter of Form, to comply with the examples or inclinations of those they desire to please, or out of Vanity to be thought extraordinary.

For to do it on such views would rob them of the benefit and comfort of the holy Sacrament, and lead them into a most dangerous Hypocrisy, in the highest act of religious Worship.

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Besides

Besides, this practice of frequent spiritual Communion, will keep your mind in a fit preparation for unforeseen Communion with sick Persons, or in Churches where you come accidentally, where, no doubt, the sincere and devout Christian may communicate without Scruple, if so inclined, and having no reasonable Hindrance. But I advise you by no means so to oblige your self as to make the omission a Fault; for that is instituting positive Duties where God has not commanded, and the making that sinful which he has left at liberty.

○ This *Spiritual Communion* must not be used so as to lead us into a neglect of that real *sacramental Communion* instituted by Christ. For, when the Providence of God affords us an opportunity of receiving the Holy Sacrament in the assembly and congregation of Christians, it would be a fault to omit it, on a pretence that we can do it Spiritually.

When I all along encourage frequent Communion, if habitually prepared; by Preparation, I mean nothing less than a constant sincere endeavour to do all your known Duties, and to avoid all wilful and known Sin, with an humble desire to encrease and perfect every Virtue; for if you are not in this state, you cannot be a worthy Receiver at all; but to be a frequent one, while you are not in it, will be a scandal to the Christian Profession, and an offence and stumbling to the Weak, as well as an aggravation of your Sins.

Nor are the more special preparatory exercises to be always willingly neglected, when you have warning beforehand and intend to communicate, and your
necessary

necessary affairs and the positive Duties of your calling will allow Time for it; but in this be sure you judge honestly, and do not call those necessary Duties which are not; for if you neglect enlarging your devotions out of a careless Spirit, or for want of delight in religious Meditations, it is a sign of an unsincere, or of a carnal, worldly Heart; for you must be diligent and faithful in the service of God, tho' not superstitious or scrupulous.

To avoid which, and for the greater quiet of your Mind, and as a method both safe and humble, I recommend the following of the advice of your Pastor, or any other discreet and pious Guide or Friend, that you are willing to speak freely to, both as to the frequency of your Communions, and the method of Preparation; but whoever you advise with in this, or in any like Cases, be sure they are persons of innocent and unblameable Lives, and of competent Knowledge and true Discretion, without affectation or superstition in their own Practice.

It is certain that no one exercise does more help our progress in Holiness, than the devout performance of this Duty; which is a motive sufficient to make us embrace all proper opportunities of exercising those Gifts and Graces we have received, that we may be thought worthy to have an encrease of them; for to those who use well what they have received, shall more be given.

The serious consideration of heavenly Objects, and of our selves, naturally tend to the improvement of our Minds, the purifying our Hearts, and quickning our affections to spiritual Things; nor can

the comforts of this Life be more effectually provided for, than by a careful endeavour to live in such a manner as secures our hope of Reconciliation to God, through Christ, and to be at peace with our selves, by the answer of a good conscience, and *as much as is possible, to live peaceably with all men.*

Nor would I have any one think, that a frequent attendance on this Ordinance, implies any conceit of Perfection; but only a sense of our Defects, and a desire to reform them, and to be as perfect as we can, by the faithful use of those means God has appointed, and to which he has promised his Blessing.

You must to your Prayers at this solemnity, add your Alms, according to your ability; or if there is no collection, set apart for some pious use that proportion of Charity that is fit for you to give.

An Example of the Method of Devotion mentioned in the foregoing Chapter.

An Act of Adoration, proper to begin any of your solemn Devotions with.

I Adore thee, O God, the Father and original of Being, Lord and Creator of all things.

I adore thee, O God the Son, Saviour of Mankind, Prince of Peace, Judge of the World.

I adore thee, O God the holy Ghost, Giver of light to the Understanding, love to the Affections, the Sanctifier and Comforter of the Elect.

I adore thee, O Eternal Unity, one God blessed from everlasting to everlasting, most Powerful, Wise, and Good, most Just, and True, one God, blessed for evermore.

Lord,

Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief; encrease my Faith, give me safe, humble, and awful thoughts of thee, that presumption and searching into what is above my capacity betray me not into Infidelity.

O let thy Word and Spirit be ever present with me, to preserve me from Error, till from seeing thro' a glass darkly, I may come to know as I am know: if I err in conceiving of thy Majesty, I renounce those my unknown Errors; for as thou canst not be but what thou art, so I would fain think of thee as thou art. Hear me, for the sake of Jesus Christ our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

1. *Acts of Dependance, Humiliation, and Contrition for past Sins.*

O Lord, thou art my Creator, and I am the creature of thy Power. I was nothing without thee, and since thou hast made me something, by my Sins I have made my self lower than nothing, even justly liable to thy Wrath and eternal Misery.

O Lord, the consideration of my abuse of thy Mercies, and of the corrupting my Nature and Being; of my ingratitude to thee, by breaking thy Laws, and sinning against the light of my own Mind, makes me hateful to my self, and how much more abominable must I appear before thee?

How many and how great are my Offences [*Here name particular Sins*] against Thee, my Neighbour, and my self, and that in Thought, Word, and Deed. And if my commissions of Evil are many, [*Here recollect the omissions of doing what God enjoined*] my o-

missions of Good, of what I ought to have done, are innumerable. How many are my sins of Ignorance, of Infirmity, of Inconsideration, besides my known and wilful Sins? contrary to the divine rule of thy revealed will in thy Word, and contrary to that light and direction which the clear reasoning of my own Mind and Conscience offered, or would have offered, if carefully attended to.

How often, after conviction, have I resolved to labour more diligently in the duties of my Christian Calling, but have not done it? And how often have I repented and returned to my Duty, but gone on with so little zeal and industry as renders me, not only unworthy to be called thy Child, but thy Servant?

And for what have I offended my Lord and Father? What were the fruits of my Disobedience? Either none, or only what were poisonous and destructive; some painted splendor they might have to attack and delude the outward Senses, but all within was Bitterness, all irregular and lothesome Deformity.

Thus Sin yields no true satisfaction while complied with. After-reflections are tormenting, and cover its captive with Shame and Dishonour, and its wages and necessary consequences, without Repentance, ends in Death. O wo is me that I have sinned! O who shall deliver me from this body of Sin and Death! From its defiling and shameful Guilt and Pollution; from its tyrannical and enslaving Power and Dominion; and from its just and natural Punishment, eternal Death, where the worm dieth not! A state of Misery, where all will be self-Accusers and self-Tormentors; a state of Enmity, where all will be hat-
ing

ing and hateful to each other ; where I shall be hateful to my self, to God, to Angels, and Saints ; nay, to Devils and damned Spirits ; for no love can dwell in those dismal Regions, where there is nothing but Sin and Evil.

O miserable condition ! Better never to have been, than so to lose my own Soul, tho' I was sure to gain the whole World ! And yet how small a part of what is called its good things, comes to the share of any single Person ? What a nothing to mine ? And shall I for this Atom, this mess of Pottage, this burden of Earth, these childish Amusements, which end in Vanity and vexation of Spirit ; shall I for these, hazard my hope of Heaven, venture the horrors of eternal Darknes ? O desperate Folly ! were there no more than the most remote possibility that these things are true.

O my Soul, Dost thou not fear to provoke Almighty Power ? Art thou stronger than God ? Art thou not ashamed to offend long-suffering Mercy ? Will he bear for ever ? To whom wilt thou fly in the day of Calamity, in the terrible day of Death and Judgment, if he shuts against thee the door of his Mercy ?

Lord, my heart trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments.

I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of Men.

I am not worthy thou shouldst come under my Roof.

How often shall I offend, and thou forgive me ?

O Lord, my Sins are numberless, yet finite ; but thy Mercy is above-measure abounding. Thou hast said, when a Sinner repenteth, thou wilt have Mercy. But do not I abuse this Mercy ? Shall I sin that Grace may abound ? God forbid : Make me ever to remember the voice of my great high Priest, Christ Jesus ;

Sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto thee.

O my Soul, neglect thy Duty no longer, lest that sentence be pronounced, Give an account of thy Stewardship, for thou mayst be no longer Steward ! This night shall thy Soul be required of thee !

2. Acts of Faith in Christ as your Sacrifice to reconcile you to God, and free you from the Power and Punishment of your Sins.

BUT, O Lord, if thou shouldst be extream to mark what is done amiss, who may abide it ?

With thee, O Lord, there is Mercy, therefore shalt thou be feared.

Thou, O Lord, wilt not the death of a Sinner, but that he return and live. Thou hast said, Why will ye die ? Death is the consequence of our own Choice, not God's. For tho' in *Adam* all die, yet in Christ shall all be made alive, made capable of Life immortal.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save Sinners, even to save me, tho' the chief of Sinners.

For

For God so loved the world, the work of his Creation, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.

Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief: I believe this is He of whom Moses and the prophets did speak, that he should be the Messiah and Saviour of the World.

There is no other name under Heaven, by which I hope for Salvation.

I adore thee, O blessed Saviour, God manifested in the flesh to destroy the works of the Devil,

O deliver me from his Power, and from the deceitfulness of Sin.

I have sinned, O be my Advocate, that wrath come not upon me to the uttermost.

O God, behold the full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice once offered, not for my Sins only, but for the Sins of the whole World.

Even that beloved Son in whom thou art well-pleased.

Hearken to the cry of his Blood, which speaks better things than the blood of Abel.

I trust and hope, that that Mercy that made me to be, that redeemed me when lost, and admitted me into terms of a new Covenant of Grace and Repentance, will not cast me off for ever.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the Sins of the World; Grant me thy Peace,

O Lamb of God, that takest away the Sins of the World; Have mercy upon me.

O thou fountain of Life and Immortality, deliver me from this body of Sin and Death.

Thou hast said, Call upon me in the day of Trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

What trouble so great as a conscience wounded by Sin? What deliverance so desirable, as from the chains of Sin and Death?

But thanks be to God, who giveth us victory thro' our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. *Acts of Thanksgiving for your Redemption by Christ.*

WHAT shall I render unto thee, O Lord, for all thy Benefits?

As I am thy Creature, made and preserved by thy Power and Wisdom; as I am a Christian, reconciled and justified by thy Mercy; and as I am, I trust, in some degree, sanctified by thy holy Spirit;

I will take the cup of Salvation, and call on the name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows in the presence of all his People.

I will not be ashamed to profess my faith in Christ crucified.

I will own my subjection to his Laws, and oblige my self to live suitably to that Profession.

I will profess my self a disciple of Christ, and that I am self-condemned when I willingly depart from his Precepts.

4. *Acts claiming to the Benefits of the new Covenant, and renewing your Consent to it, and the Conditions of it.*

O My God, since thou hast given thy only Son to be a propitiation for my Sins, I know thou wilt with him freely give me all things necessary for my Salvation, *pardon* of Sin, and Strength to subdue them; Justification by the blood of Christ, and the *aid* of thy holy Spirit, in order to a perfect Sanctification, to the inlighthing my Mind, and the purifying my Heart. And finally, a *capacity* for future Glory, that state of perfect Love and Happiness.

These are the glorious benefits of the covenant of Grace in Christ Jesus. O make me meet to be a partaker of them.

But what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, that thou mayst be capable of these Mercies?

Repentance from dead Works, and faith in the Lord Jesus; to renounce the Devil and all his Works, the pomps and vanities of the World, the sinful lusts of the Flesh; to believe in God as he has revealed himself in his holy Word, and to keep his Commandments; to do justly, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God; and to love thy God with all thy Heart, Mind, Soul, and Strength; and to love thy Neighbour as thy self: for he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Hereby

Hereby may I know my self, and all men may know that I am a true disciple of Christ, if I love in sincerity the Brethren, if I love God and keep his Commandments.

But if I say I love God, and hate my Brother, I am a Liar, and do not the Truth ; nay, I must love my Enemies, and do good to them that hate me.

For if I do not forgive men their Trespases, neither will my heavenly Father forgive me my Trespases.

These are the easy and reasonable conditions of Mercy and Salvation, the necessary dispositions for, and confirmation of my being in truth a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.

I desire to renew and declare my consent to this covenant of my Baptism, and beg Grace to keep more perfectly the conditions it enjoins : I doubt not thy Mercy and Faithfulness in conferring the benefits promised : O keep me from all those presumptuous Sins that will render me incapable of those Benefits.

Immediately before Receiving,

O Lord, in a sense of my own unworthiness, and in humble obedience to thy Commands, I do this in remembrance of what my Lord and Saviour has done and suffered, has purchased and procured for me.

O Lord, may I presume to say, remember thy Servant also, intercede for the pardon of my past Sins ; remember me when the merit of thy all-sufficient Sacrifice

fice is presented to the Father for a propitiation for the sins of the World. O remember me also, by sending the holy Spirit to lead me into all saving Truth, to enlighten my Understanding, to purify my Affections, and bring my Will to a perfect Obedience.

O remember me in the hour of Temptation, to deliver me out of it, or assist me to overcome it. Remember me in the hour of Desolation and Sorrow, to be my Comfort, and give me courage in the day of Suffering; remember me so as I may evermore remember whose disciple I am, whose laws I am sworn to; and remember me at the hour of Death, to take away its Sting, and give me victory over Hell and the Grave; and at the day of Judgment, to acquit, and pronounce the blessed sentence of admission into thy Kingdom of Glory.

5. *Acts of Thanksgiving after Receiving, for the many Mercies commemorated and sealed to the worthy Receiver.*

I Adore and worship thee, O Lord, my Creator, and Redeemer, and Sanctifier, my God, the sole object of my Adoration, my Trust, who only art to be loved and obeyed absolutely, and without Bounds or Limitations.

And now, Who is he, evil spirit or evil man, that condemneth me?

I will make answer, It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen from the Dead, who is at the right hand of God, who ever liveth and maketh In-
tercession

tercession for us, who is able to save to the uttermost all such as come unto God thro' him.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing.

Therefore Blessing, Honour, and Power be to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again into a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Christ Jesus from the Dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us.

O my gracious Master, these are the sacred promises of the new covenant in thy Blood ; I believe them ; I embrace them with Joy ; I know thou, Lord, changest not ; that thy mercy is over all thy Works ; that thou delightest in Mercy ; and that punishment is thy strange work.

O grant thy preventing Grace, that I render not my self incapable of thy Mercy.

I know there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus ; but it is only to such as walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit ; for whoever has not the spirit of Christ, can be none of his. And the fruits of the Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance.

O divine Spirit, so live in me, as to enable me to live and walk in the practice of these and all other heavenly Virtues. O Lord, I ask not the extraordinary

traordinary gifts which may puff up with Vain-glory, but those graces and that Charity which edifieth, and promotes both my own and Neighbour's perfection.

O Lord, I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed to keep thy righteous Judgments; to obey thy Laws, as revealed in thy Word; to keep the Covenant made at my Baptism, and so often renewed at thy Altar.

O for the merit of the great Sacrifice this day commemorated, hold up my goings in thy Paths, that my footsteps slip not.

O Lord, if I am sincere in my Desires and Endeavours, I know thy Grace is sufficient for me: I know I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me.

And that greater is that divine power that is in the true members of Christ, than is in those evil powers that are in the World; over which I may be more than Conqueror, thro' Christ that loved me.

Not Tribulation nor Reproach, Persecution or Death, Principalities or Powers, the love or fear of any Creature; no pursuit of false Pleasures, or fear of real Suffering, shall, I trust, ever more separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Acts of Intercession.

AND now, O God, tho' I am not worthy to ask Mercy for my self, much less to be an Intercessor for others; yet since thou hast not only permitted,

mitted, but commanded Prayer, and Intercession, and giving of Thanks, should be made for all Men.

I, a poor Sinner, in obedience to thy Commands, and from a spirit of love to all thy Creatures, presume to commend them to thy Mercy; and let not the Lord be angry, if I know not how to depart without a Blessing for them.

O thou, who art the Creator of Mankind, cast not off those creatures of thy Power and Wisdom.

O let that goodness that giveth them Being after its own image, renew that image defaced by Sin and Satan.

O let that light that lightneth every one that cometh into the World, so shine forth, as to lead deluded Sinners into the paths of Life.

Let not that heavenly light of uncorrupted Nature, those faculties of Reason and Freedom, be darkned by the doctrines of Devils, the evil customs of the World, or love of the Body; but awaken it by thy Spirit and by thy Providence, that it may shine forth more and more, until it leads them unto the perfect day of Gospel Revelation. While the *Gentiles* know not the Law, O make them a law unto themselves: tho' they have no covenant relation to plead, yet grant they may, as they are thy Creatures, find Acceptance, and give thee Glory, and for ever celebrate that perfect goodness which shall, at the conclusion of Time, be universally manifested to have been over all thy Works.

Now we see these things darkly, but then all will be brightness and demonstration.

O Lord, hasten the time, when both *Jew* and *Gentile* shall be brought under the obligations, and enjoy the benefits of the Christian Covenant.

O thou, who art the hope of *Israel*, the Saviour thereof in time of Trouble, remember thy promises to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and shew mercy unto *Israel*, as of old; soften their hard Hearts, inlighten their blinded Minds, put an end to the miseries of their Wanderings.

O Lord, how long shall the idolatry, immorality, and divisions of Christians, be an offence and stumbling to Unbelievers? O when wilt thou give thy Son the heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his Possession?

Thy promises, O Lord, are Yea and Amen. O for the elects sake, hasten their last and great Accomplishment: that tyranny and idolatry may no more pollute those who are called by the sacred name of Christians.

O when shall the lives of Christians, and the professors of Truth, be books to the Unlearned and Unbelievers?

O let deceivers no longer cry, Lo here, or lo there are Christ's disciples; but as the lightning that shineth forth from the east even to the west, so may the Truth shine forth in the purified lives and fervent love of all Christians.

When shall all men know who are thy disciples by their love one to another? Oh, perfect holiness more and more in the hearts of the People; unite them more and more one to another in thy Truth, and the bond of Love and holy Conversation.

Break the yoke of Oppression that any of them groan under any where; and suffer no longer ambitious Tyranny and Superstition to enslave, by human Usurpations, those who are called to gospel Liberty.

Restrain also the abuses of that Liberty, that it be not made by any the occasion of Sin.

Support all that suffer for thy Truth with Faith, Patience and Perseverance, and in thy due time deliver them from the power and malice of Satan and evil Men.

For thy great name's sake, cause thy Truth to prevail against Error and false Doctrine; advance and propagate thy own pure Worship, and throw down Idolatry and Superstition, and the corrupt inventions of Men, wherever they obtain.

Make thy self known to all nations, and cause all sorts and degrees of Men to understand, believe, and obey the everlasting Gospel of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

Cause real Christianity, real Holiness and Righteousness, Justice, Temperance, Purity, and Charity, to prevail wherever Christ is own'd as Lord; and rebuke the spirit of Profaneness, Debauchery, and enmity to the Life and power of true Religion, wherever they prevail or bear sway.

Set up thy kingdom in the hearts of Princes and Pastors, that they may set it up in the World; that instead of seeking their own Glory, and the enlarging their Power, they may first seek thy Kingdom and its Righteousness, and be zealous for thy Glory in opposing Sin, and being a terror to evil Doers, and a praise to them that do well.

Be merciful to these Nations ; preserve us from foreign Mischief, and home-bred Conspiracies ; shew unto all sorts of persons what is amiss in them, and has been done amiss by them, and cause a great repenting and reforming to be found in the midst of us.

Bless the King, give Him all sanctifying and saving Graces, divine Wisdom, a spirit of Discernment, to place in authority men fitted for their several Trusts and Callings.

And in all things make Him to know and do what is really good for these Nations, and for thy people every where.

That He may be not only a Father to his Subjects, but a Refuge, a Support, and a Deliverer to all that are oppress'd, or groan under spiritual or temporal Tyranny.

Direct Him to wise and faithful Counsellors, just and upright Judges ; and so influence all in Authority, that thy laws may be obeyed, and Truth and Righteousness be the glory of our Land.

In a particular manner, direct Him in the appointing fit persons to serve in the sacred offices of Bishops and Pastors of the Church ; such as may lay hands suddenly on no Man, but commit what they have received to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also ; Men fearing God, and hating Covetousness, full of prudent zeal for thy Glory, and the Salvation of Souls ; who out of a good Conversation, and pure and holy Life, may set forth thy Word in meekness of wisdom, feeding thy Flock, and taking the oversight of them willingly, not for

filthy lucre, but of a ready mind ; not as Lords over thy heritage, but as Examples to the flock. And, O Lord, I pray thee, unite the hearts and labours of all true Pastors in the great work of advancing thy kingdom, by the certain and indisputed methods of Charity and Holiness.

Bless their labours, that they be not in vain, but effectual to the conversion of many ; that when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they may receive a crown that fadeth not away.

Be gracious, I humbly pray thee, to those Persons, Places, and Families, I am bound to pray for, or who need or desire my Prayers ; suit thy mercies to their particular Cases, Conditions, and Necessities, and especially bless them with spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus.

Pity, O Lord, I humbly pray thee, the children of Affliction : remember the Poor, the Sick, the Pained, the Tempted, the distempered in Mind or Body, those that are exercised with the loss of dear Relations, or crosses in their Relations, and vouchsafe them such Direction, such Relief, Help, Support, and Comfort, as to thy infinite wisdom seemeth best for them.

Shew mercy on all who have this day met together in thy Fear : sanctify our Mercies, supply our Wants, fit us for our Trials, and help us all so to live, that when we die, our Souls may go to the Souls of the Just made perfect ; and our Bodies, at the last Day may have the resurrection of the Just, and be for ever with the Lord.

Additional

*Additional Prayers for the Clergy, to be added
on Days of Ordination*

O Thou, who are the Lord of the Vineyard, give a discerning spirit to such who are intrusted to send labourers into thy Vineyard, that they ever bear in mind the strict account they must one day give of the Souls committed to their Charge; and that every Sinner, who is not warned of the evil of his ways, his blood shall be required at the hands of the slothful and careless Pastor.

Let the sacred Canon be the rule of their Examination, doing nothing by Partiality.

O preserve thy Church from the profane intrusions of ungodly and unreasonable Men; from the pride of Novices, the vain Disputers, who minister questions rather than godly edifying; from the unstable and unlearned, who desire to be Teachers, yet know not thy Law, or the things whereof they affirm.

Bless, O Lord, these thy Servants, that as they are sent by the legal authority of Men, and have the outward call of Order; so send them out with thy divine Power as sent by thee, having the true internal call of thy holy Spirit, full of zeal for thy Service, intending more the duties than the profits or dignities of their Calling; that as they are separated, so they may be sanctified and meet for the offices to which they are appointed.

Pity so great a part of the world lost in Sin and Ignorance, and endue the Teachers of thy Law with Gifts; but if that is not needful, yet with Graces,

as at the Beginning; that Christ's kingdom may be perfected and enlarged; and all power subdued unto his just Dominion.

The harvest is plenteous, but the faithful Labourers are few; increase the number of good Shepherds, that all who undertake to feed the flock of Christ, may be guided and taught by the holy Spirit of Christ, rightly to dispense thy holy Word, that both themselves and those committed to their Charge may grow in the knowledge and love of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ; that being themselves converted, they may strengthen their Brethren, preach from their own hearts to the hearts of their Hearers, what they have received and known, and be in all things examples to the Flock.

And, O thou God of Truth, manifest thy Truth to all who sincerely seek after it, and assist, with a mighty Power, all who teach it faithfully, that it may find effectual entrance into every honest Heart, and put to silence the ignorance of all ungodly opposers.

O may the wisdom of the Christian Doctrine be vindicated by the obedient lives of Christians, that light and love may fill the World, and prepare for thy glorious kingdom of Truth and Peace.

Some short Reflections and Ejaculations, that may be used when the Communicants are few.

O Lord, I bring my firmest resolutions of a perpetual war against all my Sins, to the foot of thy Altar, to the foot of the Cross on which the great and perfect sacrifice was offered once for all.

O let the merit of that sacrifice obtain pardon for all my past Transgressions, and not only Pardon, but Strength to destroy them, that they may no more prevail to dishonour the holy name by which I am called, to defile my Soul, or offend or ensnare my Neighbour.

O Lord, assist me so with thy Grace, that I may not only destroy the dominion of Sin, that it reign not; but its very Being, that it live not in me.

Lord, I am not worthy to come to this holy Feast, but I come as wanting Pardon, wanting spiritual Strength, as desirous of Sanctification as of Justification and Salvation.

Is there any Sin I would not gladly part with? Is there any Grace or Virtue I would not gladly practise, and grow into Perfection? Is there any suffering I would not willingly undergo, if God calls me to it, or may be glorified by it?

Lord, thy Grace assisting, I find my heart disposed to answer to all this; there is not any; nothing I love more than thee, nothing I fear more than offending thee, nothing I think so grievous as what separates me from thy Favour.

Lord, I believe all thy Promises, that thy Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, are perfect, and that nothing but my own obstinate self-will can restrain the blessed influences of these thy attributes to my eternal Happiness.

O my God! thy free love and bounty brought me into Being, gave me Life, and a seed of Immortality: can I doubt but this was an effect of Love and Mercy, that thou willest my Happiness, and disposest all thy providences to awaken the faculties of my

Soul, in order to that end, so far as is consistent with the freedom of my Nature, and that order of Beings thou wert pleased to place me in? Therefore I cannot fear that any thing but my own wilful Choice, and my withdrawing from thee, and independency on thee, can ever make me miserable.

O God, I doubt not thy Bounty, O make me a subject capable of Mercy: I fear nothing but my self; my self as a Sinner, who have not lived suitably to the excellency of my Christian Profession, not valued or improved, as I ought, the greatest honour, the greatest happiness, the greatest privilege and glory on this side Heaven, to be a disciple of Christ, under the government of the most perfect Laws and Law-giver, admitted to contend for the most excellent Prize, an eternal state of Glory and Happiness, which I may certainly obtain thro' Grace, if I do not lose it by my own wilful Fault.

I most gladly renew the covenant of my Baptism, accept the conditions of it, and beg strength to perform them.

O my God, accept that full, perfect and all-sufficient sacrifice offered by thy beloved Son, in whom thou art well pleased; for his sake, according to thy gracious Promises, pardon all my Offences, hear his all-powerful Intercession for me, accept him as my Advocate to obtain for me the aids of thy holy Spirit; the Comforter to abide with me, to assist and guide me throughout this howling Wilderness, the dangerous pilgrimage of Life, that I may both believe and do according to thy Will.

Inlighten my Mind, purify my Heart, correct, instruct, and comfort me; lead me into truth by the reading thy holy Word, that I may obey all thou commandest, and suffer chearfully all thou inflictest, live and die in Faith and Charity, to thy Glory, my neighbour's Edification, and my own eternal Salvation, thro' Jesus Christ my Saviour.

A shorter Meditation.

GREAT and Eternal Lord, fountain of Being, I thy poor Creature acknowledge my entire dependance on thee. I humbly adore and worship thee, as infinitely perfect, powerful, wise, and abundant in Goodness and Truth. Thou art the author, not only of my Being, but well-being; the perfect and eternal object of my Love, the accomplishment of my Hope.

'Tis my Privilege, the perfection of my Nature, my highest Liberty, my most reasonable Service, to be subject to thy just Dominion; thy most righteous Laws and Government.

O Lord, I offer my Soul and Body, my Will, my whole Self, as a Sacrifice, a whole burnt-offering to thee, Father, Son, and holy Ghost, one God blessed for evermore. I acknowledge and adore the Word incarnate, God manifested in the flesh to destroy the works of the Devil.

O my divine Master, kill and crucify, destroy utterly in me all that offends thee.

O let the example of thy holy Life be ever present for my imitation; thy Humility, thy unwearied

Meek-

Meekness, thy contempt of the World, its Pleasures, its Honours, thy going about doing Good, thy compassion to the repenting Sinner, and thy mercy to all who are in Misery: thy patient suffering of Injuries, Reproach, Contempt, and at last Death it self, praying for thy Enemies.

O thou, whose life only is a perfect Pattern, and whose doctrine only is a perfect Rule, enable me, and all who profess thy holy Name, so to obey the one and follow the other, that at the great day of account, we may hear that comfortable Sentence, *Well done good and faithful Servants, enter into the joy of your Lord.*

A Meditation on St. Matthew, Chap. xxii.

THOU shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, *Ver. 37.*

This is the first and great commandment, Ver. 38.

And the second is like unto it, Ver. 39.

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets, Ver. 40.

And needs there any commandments for so self-evident a Duty, as loving the author of our Being and our Happiness, of all that is excellent and lovely in the Creation?

But since it is an obligation so plain from natural, as well as revealed Religion, how comes it to pass that so many professing a submission to both, yet are deficient of this divine Principle?

The

The reason is as evident as the duty; many thro' a stupid Ignorance, and not exerting those faculties by which they might discover a first Cause of all things, know not God; and very many of those who profess to know or believe a God, yet discover not his Perfections, or their Dependance, for want of Reflection; they consider not the manifestation he has made of himself in his Works and Word, the wonders of Creation and Providence, the excellency of his Laws, the glory of his Promises, the terror of his Threatnings; by all which they should be led to know God, and that he is the original and root of Being, of Life and Love; and that to love God, is to derive life and happiness from this Root; that love or dependance is the tree of Life, the gate of Paradise, the seed that nourishes unto eternal Life, and maintains those Pleasures that last for evermore: that whosoever loves God aright, will be a living Branch, bearing fruits of love to themselves and others in their proper Seasons.

To be without this divine Love, and separated from this root of Life and Happiness, is the passing into a state of Misery and Death.

Enmity to God is the great depravation, the fuel that feeds the fire that is unquenchable.

From this state of enmity to God and his Goodness, follows enmity to our selves and all the Creatures; for being separated from the root, essence, and only living fountain of Love and Happiness, it is impossible we can love our selves, or others of God's Creatures, the principle of love being dead in us. O unnatural state! O dismal fall of depending Creatures!

this cannot but be the essence of Misery and Despair.

O LORD, save me, save thy deluded creatures from whatever leads to those chambers of Death.

O excellent virtue of divine Love, thou seed of Immortality, that brings forth every good Fruit, every Grace, every Virtue, by which we do in the truest sense love our selves, and all the Creatures of God.

Do I see beauty and excellency in thy Creatures? O let me by them be led to adore and love thee the Creator.

As the Creature has no self-excellency, but receives all from thee; so direct my affections that they may never fix on the Creature but in those degrees, and according to that order appointed by thee.

O my God, make me perfect in divine Charity, and that will perfect all other graces in me.

He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is Love.

THUS if you can enter into a clear view of these two Estates, of Love and Enmity to God; or in plainer Words, of our enmity to those perfections which God has made our duty to acquire, because they are necessary to our Happiness, you will plainly perceive a chain of miseries in the one, and blessedness in the other; of beauty in the one, and deformity in the other: so that misery is not the arbitrary Punishment, but the inseparable consequence of enmity to God; in which depravation of Mind, is that essence or principle in which sin and its particular acts exist, and to which they adhere.

Some

Some Additional Meditations, which may be a part of your Sacramental Devotions.

O Blessed Saviour, thou hast said, Do this in remembrance of me. What? in the historical remembrance of thy sufferings only? O no: but in remembrance of that wondrous love that cloathed thee with human Nature, that thou mightest be our Example in thy holy Life, our Teacher and Prophet by thy holy Precepts; our Priest by thy Sacrifice and Intercession in heaven for us; and our King, by ruling and defending us, by instituting holy Laws; where this act of homage and obedience is commanded for a remembrance, that tho' greater love than this hath no man, than that a man lay down his life for his Friend; yet greater was the love of the Son of God, who shewed Mercy, and made himself a sacrifice for his Enemies.

And what does the Lord thy God require of thee for all these Benefits? To do good unto thy self, to love God and keep his Commandments; that is, love our great Benefactor, on whom we depend continually, whose yoke is easy, and whose burden is light; whose service is perfect freedom, and whose commandments are not grievous; whose second commandment is, to shew forth our love to God whom we have not seen, by our love to our Brethren whom we see continually, and whose wants we cannot but know. To love those as our selves, who are as parts of our selves; to do to these our Fellow-Creatures, as in the like circumstances we might reasonably

bly desire and expect, or as they ought to do to us, did we want their Help and Assistance.

What can be so just? What so reasonable? What so conducing to our own happiness, and the happiness of Societies?

And where are there statutes and judgments so righteous as are the Christian Doctrine and Discipline? Amazing folly! to reverence the imperfect laws of Men, and neglect and deride the laws of God; the observation of which can alone make mankind happy.

O Lord, thou knowest all things, I trust I do not deceive my self, when I say, thou knowest that I love thee.

I cannot but love thee, when I consider thy Wisdom and Goodness; I cannot but love thee, when I consider those perfections as manifested for the benefit of Mankind, and of me the most unworthy.

But if I say I love God, and hate my Brother, I am a Liar.

This is my Master's new commandment, that we love one another.

Whose life was Love, whose death was Love, and whose distinguishing precept was Love.

But alas! how many call him, Lord, Lord, yet do not this easy duty which he commands?

O where shall I go to find true disciples to this heavenly Doctrine?

O divine Spirit of Love, kindle this sacred fire in the breast of Christians, that all may know who are thy Disciples, by their love one to another; tho' we want the miraculous Gifts, let us not be without

this

this excellent Grace that shined so bright in thy first Followers, which alone would be sufficient to convert the unbelieving world to the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ, who came to teach this most perfect Precept, both by doctrine and example; for Love is the foundation and essence of Christ's Kingdom, as hatred is that of the fallen Angels: it was falling from the spirit of love and dependance, and entering into a spirit of enmity and independance on God, that brought evil and misery into Being, and still maintains it.

O thou fountain of Mercy, save me from this great Depravation, and let no injury, no suffering, no provocation, tempt me to rest in a spirit of Enmity to any, lest staying on those confines of Hell, entertaining that spirit of the evil One, I am driven into those regions of Darkness, where the worm of self-hatred dieth not, and the fire of Rage and Fury is not quenched.

C H A P. V.

On the Monday after you communicate, imploy some serious Reflections on the Obligations of your Baptismal Vow, and how well you observe it.

EXAMINATION.

1st, **D**O you renounce all Idolatry, and all that tends to it, both the outward worship of any thing but God, and the setting your heart on any

any creature more than God? Do you renounce and oppose all false worship of the true God, all superstitions and inventions of Men, not agreeing with the word of God?

Do you refuse all consulting with Astrologers, Conjurers, and such as practice unlawful, and diabolical arts?

Do you use Charms, or any of those practices, which cannot be ascribed to natural causes?

Have you a superstitious regard to Dreams, Omens, and unlucky Days, which do not become people professing Godliness, whose trust and dependance ought to be solely upon the Lord their God?

Do you not allow your self in envy or malice, or in lying?

Do you not tempt others to any Sin, to gratify your Pleasure or your Interest?

All these are peculiar characters of the Devil; therefore if you live in the practice of any of them, you do not keep this part of your Vow.

Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, Mat. iv. 10.

Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, Col. ii. 18.

Making the word of God of no effect, through your traditions which ye have delivered, Mark vii. 13.

These men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face, Ezek. xiv. 3.

Be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathens are dismayed at them, Jer. xvii. 7.

— In malice be ye children, 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

Grudge

Grudge not one against another, Jam. v. 9.

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him; when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it, John viii. 44.

The God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, 2 Cor. iv. 4.

He that committeth sin, is of the devil, 1 John iii. 8.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour, 1 Pet. v. 8.

Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath, Eph. iv. 26.

Neither give place to the devil, Ver. 27.

Why hath Satan filled thy heart, to lie to the holy Ghost? Acts v. 3.

Will ye speak wickedly for God? Will ye talk deceitfully for him? Job xiii. 7.

2dly, Do you indeed renounce the pomps and vanity of this wicked World? that is, do you avoid all excess of grandeur in your way of Living, in your Attire, Equipage, or in any other vain and sinful customs of the World?

Do you absolutely refuse to join in any unlawful Diversion, falsely called pleasure or recreation? And do you avoid the use of any that makes the mind vain, inflames any Passion, loses much time, indisposes for acts of Devotion and Charity, or the business of your place and calling? And are you not carried to excess in any recreation that is innocent and allowable?

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Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed, by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, Rom. xii. 2.

No man can serve two masters; for either he will love the one, and hate the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and mammon, Mat. vi. 24.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 John ii. 15, 16, 17.

For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God, John xii. 43.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you, John xv. 19.

3dly, DO you renounce all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh? that is, do you abhor and fly from every thing leading to Impurity and Immodesty? If your heart is pure, it will create an aversion to whatever in the remotest manner leads to Sins that are so odious and debasing.

Do you avoid all excess in Meats and Drinks, all Sloth, and indulging unnecessary ease; as Sleep, Idleness? &c.

Fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh saints, Gal. v. 3.

For no unclean person hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God, Ver. 5.

Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, Rom. xiii. 14.

For

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live, Rom. i. 13.

Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envy, Rom. xiii. 13, 14.

Be not amongst wine-bibbers, amongst riotous eaters of flesh, Prov. xxiii. 20.

The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags, Ver. 21.

Meditations and Aspirations.

O Almighty Lord, who governeſt all things in Heaven and Earth, command thy bleſſed Angels to be my Guardians, that evil ſpirits hurt me not; preſerve me from thoſe temporal Evils, that their malice may inflict. But O, much more defend me from falling by any of thoſe temptations that deſile the Soul: ſtrengthen me, O Lord, that I may ſo reſiſt as to overcome; and not by being like them in evil works, give them power over me, and provoke the good Angels to withdraw from me. Aſſiſt me alſo with ſuch wiſdom from above, as may teach me to ſubdue all ſuch affections to the World, or any thing in it, as ſhall at any time obſtruct my entire Obedience: let me rather be hated of the world, and uſed as its Enemy, for my oppoſition to it, than by any friendſhip with it, have my love to thee become more languid and unactive.

O my Lord, I will never forſake thy Service, which is my Honour, my Joy, and my Advantage, to ſerve the World, where all is Vanity and vexation

of Spirit. No : I will daily endeavour to die to the World, and then I shall more truly discern and prove what is most acceptable to thy holy Will. And if to pursue the painted splendors of the world is unworthy of a Christian, the baser gratifications of the Body are unworthy of a Man; nay, How much more is that man sunk below the Brutes, who enslaves his Reason to Sensuality? How little does such an one deserve the gifts of Reason, and those other noble faculties of the Soul? And how utterly incapable must he be of a pure angelical and spiritual Existence?

O my bounteous Creator, let me never be guilty of this monstrous baseness, to enslave my Mind to my Body, the Master to its Servant. How often is it seen that the voluptuous grow not only insensible of all the pleasures that arise from speculations of Religion and Virtue, but are incapable to be held by the ties of Justice, Honour, Love to their Country, Friendship, &c. when any of these stand in opposition to their irregular pursuits of Pleasure; but the deformities of Sensuality are not to be argued with, but cast out of the Mind, as well as Practice, with the utmost Loathing and Scorn. O Lord, I thank thee for the contempt and hatred I have ever found to these Vices.

O Lord, perfect what is in any sort defective, that I may not only abhor what is criminal, but also the approaches of all Vanity; desire to please others, or self-indulgence, and care for the Body beyond necessity.

O Lord, I resign my will to all the innocent miseries that attend my mortal Body; as Sicknefs, Pain, Old-age, Deformity: But, O keep it from all criminal Pollutions, that it may be a temple sanctified, and meet for thy divine Presence.

2dly, A T your Baptism you promised to believe the Christian Faith. Here examine if you are diligent in the study of the holy Scriptures, and use of all those means (as hearing Sermons, reading good Books, and good Conversation) needful to the obtaining of Christian Faith and Knowledge.

And do you, after due inquiry, submit your understanding to whatever God has revealed of his Nature and Will? which is sufficiently clear in all things necessary to your Salvation; especially what is your duty in order to a holy Life.

The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent, John vi. 29.

If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins, John viii. 24.

He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son, 1 John v. 10.

The unbelieving shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire, Rev. xxi. 8.

If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin, John xv. 24.

If any man will do my will, he shall know of my doctrine that it cometh from God, John vii. 17.

O Lord, by thy assistance I will endeavour to do thy Will; O that I may encrease in the knowledge of thy Word, and in a lively faith of its coming from God.

Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief: keep me from wilful Error and Ignorance; and where I err through weakness, forgive me for Christ's sake. How criminal must the infidelity of those be, who have not only been instructed in the proofs of Christianity, but can't but own the suitableness of its Doctrines and Laws to the nature of God, and the perfection of Man; and yet dare despise and transgress its Precepts, and ridicule its Doctrines? O deplorable Folly! to hazard so much for so little; to slight the certainest methods of attaining happiness in this Life, with the hopes of eternal Felicity after it, for the enjoyment of what often makes us miserable here, and ends in the apprehensions of Horror and Darkness hereafter. What madness is this! were the promises and threats taught by revealed Religion but barely possible, and proved by the lowest Probability?

3dly, The last part of your Vow is, That you will keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of your life.

These commands of God, and all that relate to a holy Life, are so plainly laid down in the sacred Scriptures, with respect to your duty to God, your Neighbour, and your self, that if your heart is honest,

nest, though your capacity should be low, you can hardly mistake any of them, at least those that are most necessary, and of universal Obligation; therefore on this head, examine your self by the word of God, particularly by that short Summary, your love to God and your Neighbour, which is the foundation of the fulfilling of the Law.

Therefore remember, that if you knowingly and wilfully offend against any one divine Law, you break this part of your Vow, which obliges you to endeavour to know and do the will of God, as perfectly as you can; and where you fail, to repent and amend.

The Unbeliever, for the most part, first sins against God's Laws, and then studies to deny his Authority, and says in his heart, he will not have this Law-giver to reign over him. A sinful life ever disposes to a corrupt and wavering Faith. There are but few, if any, apostates from the Christian Doctrine, who with a pure and humble mind endeavour to obey the Christian Precepts. They that best keep the Commandments, have the firmest Faith in, as well as most right to the promises of Christ; for true faith and sincere obedience grow together, and support each other.

O Lord, I confess thy service is perfect freedom; thou hast made that my Duty, and annexed to it the reward of eternal Life, which is in it self a Reward, and the surest means of my present Happiness. What could be done more to attract the choice of free Creatures? And how just is the punishment of such ungrateful and stubborn Rebels, who despise those

laws and dispositions that are necessary to their own Felicity?

O my God, I acknowledge, the more sincerely I have studied to obey thy holy Laws, the more perfect, and excellent, and reasonable I have found them.

O Lord, thy yoke is easy, and thy burden light ; to obey thee, is but to perfect my Nature, and make it more excellent and fit for Glory. How far do thy precepts exceed all the schools of the most sublime Philosophers and Moralists ? And yet what zeal had their scholars for the honour of their Masters ? And how rigidly did they obey their Discipline and Maxims, and thought it shameful not to do so ? And shall I, who have the greatest, best, and wisest Master, who has given the best and wisest rules of Life, and promised the best and most glorious Recompence, slight and neglect his Commandments and Institutions ? God forbid !

O Lord, begging thy Grace in time of need, by which nothing shall be too hard for me, I resolve to endeavour to my Life's end, to obey all thy Commands, to do and suffer whatever is appointed for me, as perfectly as I can.

This is the love of God, that you keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous, 1 John v. 3.

If ye love me, keep my commandments, John xiv. 15. He keepeth covenant and mercy to them that love him, and observe his commandments, Neh. i. 5.

He became the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him, Heb. v. 9.

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This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil, John iii. 19.

For every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd, John iii. 20.

But he that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God, John iii. 21.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him, John xiv. 21.

It is want of love and want of this obedience, that renders wicked men incapable to discern Truth.

GLORY be to God for his great mercy in admitting me into the covenant of Grace by holy Baptism; I most willingly and heartily renew the promises there made for me, by renouncing the Devil and all his Works, the pomps and vanities of the World, and all the sinful lusts of the Flesh; I resolve a perpetual war against these my Enemies, and to make no friendship with them, but live in constant opposition to them. I believe the sacred doctrines of Christ as taught in the holy Scriptures, and I resolve to endeavour an entire obedience to God's holy Will and Commandments to the last moment of my Life.

O Lord, assist me with divine Grace suitable to my Weakness and Wants, and such spiritual armour as may secure my Victory. I am ashamed that I have as yet been so feeble a Soldier, that I have so
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often yielded my self a Captive, so often betrayed my self, and joined with my Enemies; so often, for want of a stricter watch, been surpris'd and overcome.

O that it may be so no more! O that I may be faithful to the Death, and so obtain a crown of Life! I desire to obey and keep thy Precepts; abide with me by thy holy Spirit, that I may be, not in name only, but in truth, a Child of God, a Member of Christ, and then I shall be sure to be an Inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.

Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you to the end of the world, Mat. xxviii. 19.

Baptism doth now save us, ---- not the washing away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, John iii. 5.

Before you conclude this Exercise, examine if at the holy Table, or at any other time, you have made any religious vow or pious purpose, and reflect how you keep it; or if you have rashly made any that are unlawful and unreasonable, consult some pious and learned Guide, and submit to his Judgment and Direction, how far you are to keep it, or repent of the making it.

But if I might advise, I would prevent the intangling your self with any sort of Vow.

You

You are, as a rational Creature, and a Christian, already obliged to govern your self by sound Reason and God's Laws; and your Obligations, as arising from those Directors, will guide you safely and wisely in all exigencies, if faithfully attended to, better than hasty resolutions no where commanded, which seldom spring from solid virtue and a clear understanding, but often from weakness of Mind, or frailties of Life.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, Eccles. v. 2.

Better it is that thou shouldst not vow, than thou shouldst vow and not pay, Ver. 5.

If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word, Numb. xxx. 2.

If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord, Ver. 3.

All her vows shall stand; Ver. 4.

But if her father disallow her in the day that he beareth, not any of her vows shall stand; and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her, Ver. 5.

Or if she had at all an husband when she vowed: Ver. 6.

If her husband disallow her in the day that he heard it, he shall make her vow which she made of none effect; and the Lord shall forgive her, Ver. 8.

C H A P. VI.

Some Reflections on Death, in order to a constant Preparation for it.

ON the *Saturday* before you communicate, or if your communions are not frequent, often employ an hour or two in the serious Meditations of Death, and its Consequences, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell.

I earnestly recommend this practice, as highly beneficial to your advancement in Virtue. It will both keep you in a habitual preparation for Death, so that it can hardly be sudden to you; and it will cure many of those terrors that surprize such as seldom think of it; and by the grace of God, make your Death, when it comes, less amazing, more calm, and more edifying; and also discover how you are prepared for it, and what it is you do, or leave undone, that makes the approach of Death most unwelcome; also what affection it is that ties you most to the World, and renders you most unwilling to leave it; which, when you have discovered, you must endeavour to correct it, and do those Duties, or forsake those Sins, that, on the serious thought of Death, give you a just fear for the doing or not doing them. Represent to your self the awful solemnity of your Dying-Bed, think you hear that message; *Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live*; observe how readily you receive that Summons, and what

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it is that makes you most afraid and backward to submit.

1. If the lothesomeness of the grave strike you with Horror, consider that this debasement of your Body is but a fit punishment for its many Defilements; and how much more lothesome Sin must be, which not only brought forth Death, but all the other evils which attend the Body, during its pilgrimage thro' life to the grave: make the frightful image of a dead body familiar, by your Meditation, and by a ready attending sick and dying Persons, where desired; consider you lay down your Body in the Grave, as you lay off your clothes at Night: and why more unwilling to part with one than the other? Especially when you remember the Body is left as an old tattered garment, to be put on again all bright and glorious. Learn therefore to resign a Body so full of Infirmities, freely to the corruption of the Grave, in mortification of all its irregular Appetites.

Stay on these and such like thoughts, till they produce in you a mean esteem of the Body, and a contempt of all its Pleasures, Ornaments, and unnecessary Indulgencies; and let your affections to it rise no higher than as the curious case of a rational Soul, in which alone consists the Image of God.

The Body undefiled, is indeed a wonderful and most curious part of the material Creation, fitted for all the operations of the sensitive and rational Life; a medium by which the Soul in this lower world exerts Acts for the glory of God, by being profitable to it self and others.

But when the Body is defiled and enslaved by sensual Pleasures, it renders the whole man mean and

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contemptible, and is a cloud to the Understanding, a clog to all the faculties of the Soul, and makes man below the beasts that perish ; therefore when you consider how far your Eyes and Ears, your Tongue, and all your Senses and Members, have been the instruments and actors of Injustice, Revenge, Envy and Malice, Pride, Luxury, and Vanity, injurious to Truth and Charity, or any other like Sins or Follies, you cannot justly repine at the debasement of the Body by Death, or the corruption and deformity that attends the state of the Grave ; especially when this reasonable punishment shall end in a Resurrection of the same Body unto a state of immutable Glory ; for tho' it is sown a natural, corruptible Body, in dishonour ; it shall be raised a spiritual, incorruptible Body, in glory.

2. If the consideration of the evil of Sin, its Punishment, and the fear of God's Wrath and Judgment, makes Death unwelcome ; I confess your fears are just and prudent ; but then it is not your living longer, but better, must rid you of those Fears ; for so long as you go on in those Sins, Death will grow more terrible ; therefore resolve from the present moment, to forsake that Sin or Sins, that makes the thoughts of Death a terror. Thus the thoughts of Death will be of great use to discover your beloved Sins to your self ; for many live in many lesser vanities and omissions of Duty undisturbed, which at Death, and consequently at the serious Meditations of it, are felt to be of a more heinous nature, than we are apt to think them, in the days of our Health and Prosperity.

Indeed

Indeed many of the innocenter pleasures of Life, will at Death appear to be Folly, and their excess, Sin; and the end of both, Remorse and Shame.

3. If you would live to perfect your Repentance, and to perform acts of Mortification, in opposition to your former Sins, What can be more acceptable to God, than, in submission to his Will, not only to forsake all sinful Pleasures, but to be willing, by Death, to part with the most lawful, innocent, and desirable satisfactions and comforts of this Life? Nor is there a more certain proof that you are mortified to the world and to sense, than when you can think of leaving their pleasures without regret, and can rejoice to be freed from their Temptations.

If therefore you do indeed hate Sin, and love God, Why are you unwilling, by Death, to be out of a capacity of committing Sin, or offending God? And since we are not sure of living one day without committing some Sin, why so desirous to multiply our Days?

4. If you desire a longer Life, to do any good work or works, set about them speedily, begin the first Opportunity; for if you still defer, tho' Death come not now, yet it will come before they are finished; but if you do honestly all that is now in your Power, and are by that secure of your Sincerity, you need not be uneasy, tho' you live not to compleat all your good Designs: to be perfectly resigned in the time and manner of your Death, is what you are called to, and is a more acceptable sacrifice of your Will, than any external work can be; and it is often an over-fond opinion of our own abilities,

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that makes us fancy our selves so useful to the World; God can raise up better instruments in our place, for his Service; and he never wants his Creatures, but they him.

But take care you abuse not this advice into a lazy indifferency and carelessness to perform good works, while you have Life and Opportunity; for now it is your duty to be zealous and diligent, else you will be like that Servant, who laid up his talent in a Napkin; and you do contract the guilt of Sloth, instead of practising the virtue of Resignation.

5. Would you live to increase your Knowledge, and to perfect any discoveries in Nature, or other parts of Learning? Alas! with respect to your self, this is not worth desiring Life; for do but secure a pure and honest Heart, disposed to love God and Truth, and the little glimmerings of Knowledge you catch at here, will be full day-light and demonstration in the other World. If you are desirous to instruct and incourage others in the practice of Virtue, be assured the Spirit of God is ready to assist all that ask it, and will lead into all necessary truth all such as are sincerely obedient to, and willing to be taught by him.

As to other inquiries into the less useful parts of Knowledge, they are innocent Amusements, and useful to keep the mind from Sloth or unlawful Applications; and perhaps a more certain knowledge of these is withheld in this state of Corruption, because the labours of the Mind, as well as those of the Body, are great securities against Temptations, by employing our time innocently, and diverting our Passions from more violent and dangerous Objects.

While

While life allows, you may pursue such studies as are useful and innocent, but do it with an honest Mind, void of Vain-glory, or the base and unworthy design of disguising Truth, to serve any worldly Interest or Pleasure; and then you may chearfully leave what you have honestly begun, to be cultivated by those who come after you; for the vanity of fame for such Acquirements, is not worth the labours of this Life, and less worth the detaining us from the felicities of the other.

6. If you are unwilling to leave your Friends or Children, consider it can proceed only from your want of Faith in God's Providence, and too great a confidence in your self; for how vain a thing is it to think, by your Power or Art, to secure them from Sin or Misfortune, to make them great or wise? God, without you, can protect and guide them; but you, without God, can do very little, nothing effectually; therefore commit them to God's protection chearfully, and with all humble confidence in his Mercy, and believe he loves them and their good more than you can; and except they cast off his Government, by obstinate Impenitency, he will do what is best for them. Do your Duty carefully while you live, and then, with faith in God's Paternal Goodness, resign them chearfully and willingly when you come to die, remembering you are all bound for the same Country, and hope to be children of the same Family, and heirs of the same Kingdom.

7. Trouble not your self about the manner of your Death, nor disturb your self with such Cogitations, whether it shall be sudden, painful, violent, or the like;

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but pray that God may, and believe he will send it to you in the best Time and Manner, and give you a suitable Strength, Faith, and Patience, to support that trial, whatever it may be; desire his Glory above all, and rejoice in the fulfilling the divine Will. You may go on to consider the many miseries of Life, the shortness and uncertainty of its Pleasures, the frailty of your Nature, how neither our Honours, Riches, nor Pleasures, follow us beyond the Grave, but only the use or the abuse of them.

How little then do they deserve to be thought our Happiness? On the other side, Sorrow, Sickness, Poverty, Contempt, or Persecution, cannot vex us beyond the Grave; Death will deliver us from their Power: how great a comfort then is this to the afflicted? And how easy should those Evils seem, whose duration is so short, and which, if improved, can procure eternal Rewards? You may find many excellent meditations on this subject, in Dr. *Sherlock's* book of Death and Judgment, and others on the like Head; read them carefully, and you will be convinced that Death ought not only to be submitted to, as a consequence of the mortality of your Body, but, with resignation to God's Will, even longed for, as a deliverance from a state of War, Captivity, and Labour; and as an entrance into a state of Rest and Joy; a harbour from the stormy sea of Life, a Father's house; the possession of the purchased inheritance by Christ, after a state of Non-age, of Labour and Servitude.

Acts of Resignation, as to the Manner, Time, and Abasement of Death; also of Faith, Love, &c.

O Eternal Lord, and author of my Being, I resign my Soul and Body to thee, who only hast a right to them. Resignation.

O thou, who art most wise, just, and good, choose for me: I desire that thy will, not mine, may be done in me, and by me, now and for ever.

I desire to die at that time, and in that manner, as may be most for thy Glory.

O assist me with thy Grace, to accomplish thy holy Will, in which consists my greatest Perfection.

Thou art my Creator and Sovereign; it is meet that I depend on thee.

Whenever thou appointest, I desire to embrace, with humble Submission, the dissolution of my Body by Death, and that it return to its first Obscurity.

I accept the separation of my Soul and Body, and all the abasements that follow that separation, as its Deformity, Corruption, Rottenness, being food for Worms, being lothed and forgotten by all; I accept these abasements, as the just punishment of my Pride, my love to the Ease, Pleasures, Beauty, and the Ornaments of the Body.

Some Heads of Examination.

HAVE you, or do you, gratify Luxury of any kind?

Here stop, and reflect a little on the following Particulars.

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1. Do

1. Do you indulge the love of delicious Meats and Drinks, or spend more thought, time and expence, to procure them, than the decency of your station requires? Consider, the Body so much nourished, shall in time, and probably the sooner, be food for Worms.

2. Have you, or do you, by vain Attire, and needless Ornaments, lay snares for the Unwary, or desire to attract the eyes and admiration of the Simple?

3. Do you value your self for the richness or niceness of your Dress? Or, Do you despise any who want, or will not use such Ornaments?

4. Do you waste much time and money in Clothing your self sumptuously, more than your place and decency requires?

5. Consider, that the Body you so carefully adorn, and all its Ornaments, shall soon moulder into dust and lothesome rottenness.

Remember too, that beauty does not wait for its last ruin by Death, but daily decays with Age; in vain will be all the endeavours of art and ornaments to repair its Ruines: wisdom and virtue are the only ornaments that become every Face, and are proper and graceful for all Persons and Ages: secure these only durable Beauties, and then willingly submit to the decays of Age, and make them not more remarkable by vain endeavours to conceal them.

O My God, ever good to me, yet how often have I forgotten thee?

I desire to be content to be forgotten by my Friends, and by all Men; and for the abuse of my Senses,

Senses, and the riches and enjoynments of the World, by Death to be deprived both of the use of my Senses, and of all the objects of their gratification.

I would not live over my past Life: Why then should I desire to lengthen it, when I know not if my future days shall be better than my past?

Lord, I confess my self a Sinner; Death is the wages of Sin; Sin, that imbitters the sweets of Life, and brings forth and nourishes the terrors of Death.

O unnatural state! How can I regret what will set me out of the reach of so great an evil as Sin?

Lord, pardon all my past Sins, especially * -----

* Here remember your greatest Sins.

Lord, fill my heart with thy Love, that assisted by thy Grace, I may hate all things that offend thee, and utterly forsake every evil Way.

I will henceforth endeavour to be more diligent in thy Service, not knowing when my Lord will come to take an account of my Stewardship, especially † ----- which I have too much neglected.

† Here renew your Resolutions of doing those duties better, you find neglected.

O Lord, pardon my Sins, and assist my resolutions for Christ's sake.

O remember those inconceivable agonies of thy beloved Son, which he endured in the Garden, and on the Cross!

Behold the Propitiation for the sins of the World!

O make me a partaker of the merits and benefits of that Sacrifice.

How can I fear that that goodness which gave a Saviour, will not with him give all things needful for my Salvation?

How can I fear, who find my heart desirous to please God, and live to his Glory?

God will not cast off for ever such as come to him, and depend on his Mercy.

O my God, speak peace unto my Soul; say unto me, Be of good cheer, thy Sins are forgiven thee, go in Peace; but remember that sacred Warning, Take heed to sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee, eternal Death.

But, Lord, it is not only pardon of Sin I ask, but strength to destroy it.

O assist me with thy holy Spirit to purify my Affections, and do thou so enlighten my understanding, that my will may in all things choose aright.

O preserve and increase the fire of divine love in my Heart, that it may consume all that is earthly and sensual in me, and fortify me in my last Passage, against all the assaults of the Enemy.

O my God, I receive Death as the just punishment of Sin. I submit willingly to the decrees of thy Justice, and rejoice to be one day freed from this body of Sin and Death.

I offer my self a willing Sacrifice, desiring it may be made acceptable by the merits of that which Christ once offered on the Cross.

Lord, I know that I am weak, and my heart deceitful; but, assisted by thy Grace, I hope I am willing to lay down my life for thy sake.

O preserve in me a true spirit of Martyrdom, and then, if I am so far honoured as to be called to suffer for the cause of Truth and Virtue, let me rejoice in it, and persevere to the end, to the Glory of thy holy Name,

Name, from whom is the Power, and to whom be the Praise.

But, O my Soul, deceive not thy self, or think thou hast a spirit of Martyrdom, while thou canst not bear, as becomes a Christian, Sickness, Pain, Contempt, loss of Friends, or other evils of Life; for if God calls thee to these Trials, then to accept them with a willing submission and resignation to God's Will, is the martyrdom of thy Will; and if the honour is less, the danger too is less of its being corrupted by Pride, Vanity, and Humour, which sometimes mixes with sufferings of our own choosing.

O my God, though I am not called to seal my Faith, by my dying for it, I may bear witness to it by my Life. O give me courage to own Christ crucified, and never to be ashamed to do my Duty, or confess my Faith, how much scorn soever I suffer for it. If I can't endure reproach or contempt for thy Name, how dare I pretend I would die for thee?

What are these charms of Life, that we so unwillingly leave? I have ever found them more painful than pleasant. What are Riches and Honour, but burdens to the Possessors? Except by using them well, they may secure to us our lasting Happiness. Were I sure I were now dying, what Joy or Comfort would any past worldly or sensual pleasure yield me?

But any Good I had sincerely done, or any Evil I had patiently suffered for well-doing; any Acts of Justice, Charity, Temperance, Purity, Humility, Forgiveness, such Acts would comfort me even in Death it self.

O Lord, assist me so to live, as my conscience may approve in the hour of Death, or rather, as thou who judgest according to Truth, mayst approve.

Enable me, O Lord, to defer no longer any opportunity of doing good to the Soul or Body of my Neighbour, lest Death deprive me of the reward of my Charity.

Happy are those, who when their Lord comes, shall be found so doing. To die in the labours of Charity, is as glorious as to be a martyr for Truth; it is to die in the exercise of the sublimest Virtue, which shall be the Glory of heaven it self.

O Lord, I am weak, subject to Error, Acts of Faith. and live in a time when men seek the promoting their own Doctrines more than thy Truth; I renounce all these vain disputings of Men void of Charity.

I desire to die in the firm belief of thy Being, thy Attributes, and of all those Truths revealed in thy Word; where I err by Misapprehension, forgive for thy Son's sake.

I desire to die in union with Christ's Church throughout the World, with all who are his living Members, and who have the Spirit of Christ, without which there can be no union with that Body, of which Christ is the Head.

O let me not be cut off from that Body, but so united to it by thy Spirit, that when Christ, who is the Head, shall appear, I may also appear with him in Glory.

O my God, as I believe that thou art, so also that thou art the rewarder of all them that diligently serve thee.

I am sure that all the methods of thy providence are suitable to the perfections of thy Nature, though my limited capacity can't in every particular discover how they are so.

I renounce all temptations to Error or Unbelief, that the enemy may suggest.

I humble beg, O divine Spirit of Truth, that thou wilt enlighten me in my last moments, and keep me from all Delusion or Doubts; and if it please thee to honour me so far, enable me so to speak and act, as may be most to thy Glory, and the edification of my Neighbour. But if I am unworthy of these Consolations, I submit to thy Will; but, O let me die reconciled to thee in thy Faith and Love, and I cannot be miserable.

Glory be to God, that I was born of Christian Parents, dedicated to thee in holy Baptism, instructed in the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, its duties as well as its benefits.

Acts of
Praise.

Glory be to God for all his Long-suffering, his preventing and assisting Grace, offers of Pardon on Repentance, and for all the means of Grace and hope of Glory. And now, why should I fear Death, who believe in the merciful nature of God, my Creator, in the infinite merits of Christ, my Redeemer and Advocate?

I confess I am a Sinner, and deserve Punishment; but the new Covenant proclaims pardon to all who confess and forsake Sin.

I confess and hate my Sins; O enable me to subdue them, and to persevere in my love to thee, my God, to the last moment of my Life. Hear me, I beseech

beseech

beseech thee, for the sake of Jesus Christ our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

ON the days you use these Meditations, you may dispose your Intercessions to the same Design; praying

That the Heathen may come to know the way to Life and Immortality, through the Gospel.

That Christians may live as become the promises and threatnings, the obligations and benefits of the new Covenant.

That the *Reformed*, who teach no other way to Heaven; but Repentance, Faith, and a holy Life, may live suitably to that Doctrine.

That *Kings* and *Judges* of the World, may remember that they themselves must one day be judged, and give an account for all the talents they have received, to God, who has no respect to Persons, but giveth to every man according to his Works.

That they must answer for all their abuse of Power, their usurpations over their Neighbours, their tyranny over their People, their ill examples of Luxury, their Oppressions, all the innocent blood they have shed, and the unjust sentences they have pronounced.

That the *Bishops* and *Pastors* of the church may feed the Flock, as remembering the account they must give to the chief Shepherd, who laid down his life for his Sheep.

In like manner go on to pray, that the thoughts of Death and Judgment, Heaven and Hell, may have a due effect to awaken every one to a holy Life, and a due execution of their Office and Calling.

That

That the Sinner may be awakned to Repentance, the Converted carried on to Perfection.

That the *prospect* of *Death* may support the Poor and Afflicted, and regulate the excesses of the Rich and Prosperous ; that God would supply the wants of all under Pain or Sickneſs, ſend help both for their Souls and Bodies, comfort them with the illumination and conſolations of his holy Spirit, the miniſtry of his Angels, the aſſiſtance of pious Guides, and whatever is needful to diſpoſe them, by true Faith and Repentance, for a ſafe and comfortable Death ; and that thoſe poor ſouls who are deſtitute of all outward Comforts, may be more abundantly ſupplied with the graces of Faith and Patience under all their Sufferings.

Alſo you may pray that God, in mercy to Mankind, will give *Health* and *long-Life* to all *pious* and *good Princes*, juſt and faithful Judges, Counſellors, and Magiſtrates, pious Biſhops and Paſtors, and all good Men and Women, whoſe Examples, Labours, Prayers, or any good work undertaken by them, may tend to God's Glory, and the benefit of Mankind.

Alſo pray for the lives of all who are near and dear to you, any that are at that time ſick, or in danger of Death ; humbly deſiring that God would hear the prayers of Friends and Relations, Huſbands and Wives, Parents and Children, for each other, and ſpare their lives ſo long as ſhall be for the good of them and theirs ; or elſe receive them into the boſom of his Mercy, and comfort thoſe who are left behind with a ſpirit of true Reſignation and Submiſſion, not ſorrowing as thoſe without Hope ; and ſupply them
with

with proper graces and capacities suitable to their Trials and Stations.

Pray for any who are in a state of Sin, that they may have space of Repentance, and not be called out of this World, till fitted for a better ; desiring that your self, and all you pray for, may so remember Death as to make haste to live, that you may so live before you die, as not to die eternally.

Acts of Forgiveness and Reconciliation.

O Lord, for thy sake, I heartily forgive all who have done me Wrong, and beg for them Pardon and Mercy ; as for my self, I am willing also to beg pardon of any I have at any time injured, and make a firm purpose to ask it, if proper, whenever a fit Opportunity offers ; and so soon as I can, to make what restitution I am able for any injury I have done to the Reputation, Interest, or Goods of my Neighbour.

IN these Particulars, if you are under any difficulty, advise with some pious and discreet Friend or Minister. Also set apart some Charity, for the relief of sick and infirm Persons, with these, or some such like Ejaculations.

O Lord, supply the wants of the Poor and Needy ; make thou their bed in their Sickness ; be thou the physician of their Souls and Bodies.

O supply, with thy divine Consolations, the want of outward help for either ; tho' they lie neglected at the

the doors of the Rich, grant they may find rest in the bosom of thy Mercy. Accept, O Lord, this small oblation of what thou hast intrusted me withal, and direct me how to dispose it most for the comfort of my poor Brother; and let the sense of thy Mercy and Bounty ever maintain in me a thankful Heart.

Texts of Scripture relating to the foregoing
Meditations.

I Have said to corruption, Thou art my father: and to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister, Job xvii. 14.

For I know thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living, Job xxx. 23.

Man that is born of a woman, is of few days and full of trouble, Job xiv. 1.

He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not, Ver. 2.

It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, Heb. ix. 27.

O that men were wise, that they understood this; that they would consider their latter end! Deut. xxxii. 29.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, Psal. xc. 12.

Lord, make me to know my end, and the measure of my days what it is, that I may know how frail I am, Psal. xxxix. 4.

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace, Psal. xxxvii. 37.

But what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he have gained, when God taketh away his soul? Job xxvii. 8.

But

But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night shalt thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall these things be which thou hast provided? Luke xii. 20.

So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, but is not rich towards God, Ver. 21.

Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and that day overtakes you as a thief, Luke xxi. 34.

For what is a man profited, though he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Mat. xvi. 26.

O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? 1 Cor. xv. 55.

The sting of death is sin, Ver. 56.

But thanks be to God that giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Ver. 57.

Therefore be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord, Ver. 58.

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee, Psal. lvi. 3.

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord, Lam. iii. 26.

Be ye followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises, Heb. vi. 12.

Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord --- that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them, Rev. xiv. 13.

They that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus; Ver. 12.

These

These are they which are come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them, Ver. 15.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto fountains of living waters; and God shall wipe away all the tears from their eyes, Ver. 17.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city, Rev. xxii. 14.

For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, Ver. 15.

And behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every one according as his work shall be, Ver. 12.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son, Rev. xxi. 7.

IF you have any worldly goods or estate in your power to dispose of, be sure never to be without a Will made in the days of your health, and freedom of Mind; and often reflect if it is made by the rules of Christianity.

First, If you consider justice to all the World, for that is due to all Men, even your greatest Enemies.

Next, if your designations of what you have, are according to the merits or necessities of those Friends and Relations you love; and that neither pride in
heaping

heaping much where there was before abundance, unreasonable fondness without Merit, or any as unreasonable disgust, where the pretensions are equal, do not influence you in disposing your Goods and Estate: but let *sober Reason* and true *Christian Charity* be your only Rule.

It may be safe to communicate your intentions to some wise and honest Friend; but choose one who is not concerned by Interest to be partial in the Advice; and take care the law-part is done by a wise and honest Man, that quarrels and law-suits may, if possible, be prevented.

C H A P. VII.

Some Reflections on the Temper of your Mind, Regularity of your Passions and Affections, by way of Meditation and Examination.

1. **I**S the temper of your mind such as becomes one who is indeed dedicated to God? How are your thoughts usually employed? What is the current they most naturally take? Are spiritual Meditations most acceptable? Does the reading or hearing of some extraordinary Acts of Piety, or heroick Virtue, give you a pleasing Joy? For the best use of thought is to represent the lovely ideas of Virtue, till you are so charmed with its beauty, as to resolve to obey its dictates.

2. Do you find your heart cleaves to, and esteems them most who excel in Wisdom and Piety? that such conversation revives your Spirit? that you
choose

choose it, though the persons are obscure and condemned, rather than that of the great, the gay, and witty of the World, if without Virtue? Do the Vices of others grieve you? Do you find an inward abhorrence of what is sinful, ungenerous, selfish, or unsincere.

3. Observe also if your mind is inwardly calm; and in a fit disposition to reason clearly, and hear the still voice of the Spirit of Truth.

Consider also what your studies are; if useful, at least innocent, to promote commendable Knowledge or Virtue; and observe what Books please you most, and you relish best; for all these are great indications of the habitual state of your Heart and Affections.

4. Particularly observe your Conversation; if you truly endeavour, as far as is consistent with your station, age and capacity, to make it as useful as you can; that it be not to gratify Ill-nature, Levity, or Vanity, but friendly, or to keep up an innocent Cheerfulness; for nothing more indisposes the mind to clear views of Truth, and right apprehensions of the nature of moral Perfections, than the empty levity of some peoples Conversation, where a false show of wit often corrupts the understanding with bad Principles, as well as deludes the affections with its deceitful Pleasures.

Ungoverned appetite and passion is the parent of Darkness and Error, it naturally deceiving and clouding the Understanding, indisposing the Mind, by Prejudice, for finding Truth or choosing Virtue.

O My God, I can never reflect on the excelling usefulness of Virtue to my present as well as future Happiness, but I love and am charmed with its Brightness and Beauty. I can see nothing in what is called Pleasure, Greatness, or Riches, worthy to be compared to it: for its sake I desire to condemn all these, yea, Life itself.

But alas! How little honour do I do to Religion or Virtue by my Life? How often does sloth, or fear to offend, or care to please, a vain World and its erroneous Customs, betray me into Folly? I know and approve my Master's Will, the Christian Discipline, but I do it not. O great Creator, who made me after thy own Image, renew that Image (defaced by Sin) in Righteousness and true Holiness. To thee I dedicate my mind with all its Faculties and Operations, humbly imploring it may be in all things informed and ruled by thee: that so my Understanding may rightly comprehend what is revealed for me to know, my Memory retain, my Will consent, my Affections embrace, whatever is my duty to believe or to do.

O dispel those clouds and darkness that arise from my corrupt Nature, that the light of Truth may shine evident in my Soul.

O that I may never, by entertaining any sinful Passion or Affection, grieve thy Spirit, or resist thy divine Direction.

O divine Truth and Virtue, how lovely are ye? To be preferred, though accompanied with Poverty, Contempt, Sickness, or whatever other innocent Suffering

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Suffering I am capable of, before Beauty, Wit, Riches, Honour, Health, Fame, yea, the whole World, with a defiled Conscience.

O that I may ever live at Peace with thee, my Lord, and with my self; and then I cannot be miserable.

I ask neither prosperity nor adversity, but strength to do thy Will, in whatever state thy providence thinks meet to place me.

O make me perfect, even as my Father which is in heaven is perfect.

O that my Thoughts, my Studies, and Conversation, may be to encourage my self and others, to pursue the straight paths of Truth and Virtue.

O Lord, I beg, as for my self, so for all rational Beings, Grace and Mercy, and all those divine and moral Virtues that are suitable to their Places and Callings, Necessities, and Temptations, that they may so see the evil and deformity of Sin, as to hate and abhor it; and the beauty and profit of Holiness, as to love and practise it; particularly that the lives of all true Professors may be as lights set on a Hill, that may enlighten all the dark corners of the Earth; that thy Kingdom may come with Power, and reform whatever is amiss in the belief or lives of Christians.

SO go on to pray for such Graces and Virtues that the circumstances of any you would pray for require.

I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love, Psal. cxix. 113.

Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life, Prov. iv. 23.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts, Gal. v. 24.

Be not conformed to this world, Rom. xii. 5.

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, Eph. v. 11.

They think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you, 1 Pet. iv. 4.

Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings, Isa. li. 7.

Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners, 1 Cor. xv. 33.

The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them, Prov. xii. 26.

Make no friendship with an angry man, Prov. xxii. 24.

Left thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul, Ver. 25.

He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken, and without walls, Prov. xxv. 28.

Only by pride cometh contention, Prov. xiii. 10.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things; Mat. xii. 35.

For from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, Ver. 34.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, Mat. v. 8.

I have as great delight in thy commandments, as one that findeth great spoils, Psal. cxix. 162.

I hate all evil ways, but thy laws do I love, Psal. cxix. 163.

Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee, Ver. 11.

Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law, Ver. 18.

I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed, Ver. 49.

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my self, John vii. 7.

He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh his glory that has sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him, Ver. 18.

If any man consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, that is according to godliness, 1 Tim. vi. 3.

He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railing, evil surmisings, Ver. 4.

Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness; from such withdraw thy self, Ver. 5.

HERE is an excellent Rule, both for the government of your own Mind, and choice of Conversation; that you suffer not your spirit to be agitated in useless Contentions, about things of little or no Moment, which often begin in Pride, and end in Infidelity: from such persons whose minds are corrupt, and so indisposed to receive the Truth, and consent not to be tried by the word of God, we are

commanded to withdraw our selves; and it is safest so to do, except your calling or relation make it your duty to converse with them, and labour their Conviction.

O My God, let not the false appearances of wit delude or dazzle my weak Mind; but so assist my glimmering reason with divine Light, that from the contemplations of thy Works and Word, I may see and abhor the folly of those who deny thy Being, or thy Government; and so purify my heart by Obedience, that I may, from the experience of the excellency of thy Laws, say, they are of God, and that it is a good thing to serve the Lord: As for those perverse disputings about words that do not profit, for things not fully revealed, and are above human understanding, or little available to Virtue or Godliness; for these Uncertainties, let me never transgress that plain, that lovely grace of Charity, the bond of all Perfection, and safest passport to the new Jerusalem.

And though I understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing,
1 Cor. xiii. 2.

— *Faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity, Ver. 17.*

The meek will be guide in judgment: the meek will he teach his way, Psal. xxv. 9.

O that I may still endeavour to keep my Mind humble, and empty of Self-will, and all Passions,
that

that so with a child-like Simplicity, without Partiality and Prejudice, I may be ready to entertain the pure and simple truths of divine Revelation.

O thou who lightest every one that cometh into the World, let not my mind be puffed up by Vanity and Self-conceit, nor my affections biaſſed and four-
ed by worldly Wiſdom, and the teaching of men of like Paſſions: let not hope or fear, intereſt or blind obedience, hinder my receiving and obeying thy truth in the Love thereof, nor permit me to fall into that pride and obſtinacy of adhering to, and defending Error, becauſe I was once engaged in it.

Neither, O heavenly Father, permit the various opinions and contentions of Men, to be to me labyrinths of Error, or temptations to Infidelity, Doubts, and Confuſion, but make them to my ſelf motives of Humility, as being my ſelf weak and fallible; and to my Neighbour, of Meekneſs and Charity; for pride was not made for Man, nor furious anger for the ſons of Men. *Amen.*

1. LET the foregoing conſiderations of the ſhortneſs of human Underſtanding, move you to pray more earneſtly to God for a greater pouring forth of the holy Spirit, eſpecially the ſpirit of Love and mutual Forbearance, to aſſiſt the weakneſs of human reaſon in the diſcovery of all neceſſary Truths, and the faithful obeying and confeſſing what is known.

2. Let the ſenſe of the ſhortneſs of your Knowledge, while in the Body, keep you humble and modeſt, ſo as not to be imperious and poſitive in your

own Assertions, but make you long for a state when you will know as you are known, perfectly and truly.

3. Let the consideration of the great depression Sin makes on the faculties of your Mind, in the pursuit of Truth and Science, be an additional motive for your hatred of what is not only opposite to the hopes of a Christian, but also to what is the glory of a Man, the brightness of his Reason, and the faculties of his Mind.

Lastly, Resolve neither to use or desire knowledge to satisfy Curiosity, to gratify Vain-glory, Pride, or a spirit of Contention ; but for the glory of God, the perfection of your Being, and the benefit of your fellow Creatures.

Refuse profane and old wives fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness, 1 Tim. iv. 7.

Unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes, 2 Tim. ii. 23.

This is a faithful saying ; and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works : these things are good and profitable to men, Titus iii. 8.

But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law ; for they are unprofitable and vain, Ver. 9.

C H A P. VIII.

Some Reflections and Examinations on the Use you make of those outward Advantages you are intrusted with:

As Friends, Riches, Reputation, Health, &c.

Consider all these as lent of God, whose Steward you are, and to whom you must give an account for them, if not used to the glory of the Giver.

E X A M I N A T I O N.

I. **D**O you neglect any proper opportunity to help your neighbour under any affliction of Mind or Body; that is, according to your ability, and the circumstances of your Duty to your Family, and Station? Particularly,

1. Are you ready to instruct the Ignorant, where it is proper for you, and you are capable of doing it? And in particular, Are you ready to promote and contribute to those best of Charities, the teaching poor Children to read and write, and putting them into a capacity of getting an honest Livelihood?

2. To comfort the Afflicted, and heal with kind and good advices the Broken-hearted?

3. To reprove, and to endeavour to reclaim those who wander into the mazes of Sin and Error, and bring them back to the paths of Truth and Virtue?

4. To

4. To assist with good advice those who require it?

Do you bear patiently the ingratitude and injury you meet with for your Good-will? And is forgiveness easy to you?

6. Do you pray for others heartily? For though you can't relieve all, you may pray for all.

7. Are you ready to support and defend, as you can, such helpless people as are oppressed by unjust Power or Malice, especially the Strangers, the Fatherless, and Widows?

8. Do you heartily rejoice at the prosperity of your Neighbour? And do you not envy him if he exceeds you in temporal Advantages?

9. Do you feed the Hungry, give drink to the Thirsty, clothe the Naked?

10. Do you harbour and shew kindness to the Stranger?

11. Do you visit the Sick, and procure what is needful to the recovery of their Health, and quiet of their Minds?

12. Do you not sling any into Prison who have nothing to pay you; but are you rather willing to contribute according to your ability, to the setting honest poor men at Liberty, which is a great and noble act of Christian Charity?

II. Consider if you use your interest in your friends to promote God's Glory and the publick Good, and to the support of your poor Neighbour, if oppress'd; and to encourage them to assist in the carrying on any good Work.

Or do you not rather, or more willingly, imploy your interest in the partial procuring the advancement of

of your self, or Friends and Relations, in compliance with the spirit of Ambition, Vanity, or Pride?

If you solicit for a Friend, take care he is fit for what you pretend to for him : if for your self, endeavour to deserve what you desire, and then use a modest application in it : this, if the event is submitted to Providence, may be allowable : but all methods of servile Flattery, Bribery, or the defaming or lessening the merits of other Pretenders, or whatever art is inconsistent with Christian Vertue, on which you dare not beg God's Blessing, is not by any means to be made use of ; nor can you think any thing so acquired God's Gift, or that he will bless you in the enjoyment of it.

Indeed, had we a true impartiality to our selves, and an exact justice to our Neighbour, we could not oppose the pretensions of such, as we were conscious to our selves were more capable of discharging what was pretended to than we could be : but this is a degree of Vertue more to be admired than expected, so long as self-love and self-opinion reigns so unconstrainedly in the breasts of most Men.

Lastly, As you are to examine if you give alms suitable to your Fortune, so also if you dispense them prudently, and not out of Vanity, or to gratify an easy good Nature, apt to be moved ; but so as you judge may do the most good, and relieve the greatest Necessities, without any regard to Vain-glory or Praise.

Consider how well you manage your Estate ; for a careless prodigal can never be just, much less charitable.

Examine

Examine your expences carefully, and what may be decently retrench'd to help the poor, after a modest computation of what your station requires.

Are you truly hospitable? that is, Do you cheerfully give a share of what you have provided, especially to the stranger, and poorer sort; providing a plain Plenty, clean and wholesome, according to your Ability?

Both covetousness, and prodigality are void of good Works; the one will not, the other cannot perform them; but you must not call frugality, covetousness; the one saves from things useless, to employ better; the other saves only to lay up, and not to use at all.

Therefore consider if you do not exceed what is necessary in Clothes, vain Feastings, Equipage, change of Furniture, Gaming, &c.

If you have a Family, examine how careful you are in the instructing and correcting your Children and Servants: if you keep them to their duty to God, to their proper studies and business; also if you are careful to advise your Servants, and teach them what is for their good to learn, rewarding them according to their Deserts and your Ability, or being willing to part with them for their Advantage. If you allow your servants convenient time for religious Duties, and direct them how to employ it, for the good of their Souls and future State.

Examine also how you improve that reputation you have in the World; if you make use of the affection and good opinion any have of you, to encourage them in good Works, to turn them from Sin and Vanity; if you reprove or advise where it is proper for

for you, with Humility, Meekness, &c. an affectionate Courage and Fidelity. Do you, in making your Friendship and Acquaintance, chiefly consider God's Glory, and to do good in the being better'd by your Friends, or making them better?

After some serious thoughts on these, or the like obligations to any other good Works, renew an humble dedication of your self, your Estate, Friends, Interest, Reputation, &c. to the honour and service of God; considering them all as talents received from him, for which you are to give an Account.

Pray also for a Will entirely resigned to God, in the keeping or losing of any of the comforts of this Life; as Reputation, Friends, Fortune. Also where you find you are defective, renew your resolutions in that Particular; with the means how to do better: as, if your defect is in Alms-giving, lay by for that use such a sum as may make amends for that Neglect, and is *suitable* to your *Ability*; remembering that what you dedicate to God and good Works, you cannot without sin alienate to your own Use, except necessity makes it a charity to your self, whom you may consider first in that case.

O My God, how dare we pretend to love our Neighbour as our selves, when we will not abridge our vanity and superfluous expences for the supply of their Necessities, and the relief of their Miseries!

Shall I bestow on Luxury and Niceness, to please a vitiated Appetite, and encrease Desires, what would feed many starving families with necessary Food?

Shall

Shall I expend in vain ornaments what would clothe many naked Backs? Is not this inhuman, and contrary to the natural love we owe to our own Kind, which the light of Nature condemns, and is directly opposite to the express precepts of holy Scripture?

How wretchedly has the sinful customs of the World prevailed, to extinguish so bright, so delightful, and so plain a duty as is that of Charity and brotherly Love? O deplorable apostasy both from the spirit and practice of the true Disciples of Christ, who went about doing good, and made Love the perfection of the Law! O my God, preserve me from this most dangerous and certain mark of an Antichristian Spirit.

Shall I break my sleep, and lose my time in vain and expensive Games and Recreations, while so many thousands are forced to rise early and sit up late to provide bread for their Families; who are so overworn with Care and Labour, that they have hardly time for God's Service and necessary Rest? And shall I weary my self with Vanity, and so render my self less disposed for God's Service, out of choice, than they are out of necessity?

O wretched abuse of Time and Riches! Give me Grace to imploy both better, or take them from me.

Give me rather honest Poverty, than Riches to keep or expend to my own hurt, or the hurt of my Neighbour.

O my Lord, direct and assist me so to use the talents I receive, that at the last day of account I may hear that joyful Sentence, Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

Then

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Then shall the king say to them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, Mat. xxv. 34.

For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; Ver. 35.

Naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me, Ver. 36.

And the king shall answer, Verily, I say unto you, forasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me, Ver. 40.

Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me, Ver. 45.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal, Ver. 46.

Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard, Prov. xxi. 13.

He that loveth pleasures, shall be a poor man, Ver. 17.

He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor, Prov. xxviii. 8.

If I have withheld the poor from their desire, and have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, Job xxxi. 16.

Or have eaten my morsel my self alone, and the fatherless have not eaten thereof: Ver. 17.

If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering, Ver. 19.

The stranger did not lodge in the streets, but I opened my door to the traveller, Ver. 32.

Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor? Job xxx. 25.

Thou

Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, Deut. xv. 10.

Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it, Prov. iii. 27.

Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee, Ver. 28.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy, 1 Tim. vi. 17.

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, Ver. 11.

When thou makest a feast, call the poor: Luke xiv. 13.

And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee, Ver. 14.

Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him, Lev. xix. 17.

Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee, Prov. ix. 8.

He that rebuketh a man, afterward shall find more favour than he that flattereth with his tongue, Prov. xxviii. 23.

A flattering mouth worketh ruin: a man that flattereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feet, Prov. xxvi. 28.

Faithful are the words of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful, Prov. xxvii. 6.

He that regardeth reproof is prudent, Prov. xv. 5.

He that refuseth instruction, despiseth his own soul, Ver. 32.

A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity, Prov. xvii. 17.

A man that hath friends, must shew himself friendly,
Prov. xviii. 24.

Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not,
Prov. xxvii. 10.

The prince that wanteth understanding, is also a great oppressor, Prov. xxviii. 16.

But he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days,
Prov. xx. 21.

The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame, Prov. xxix. 15.

And thou shalt teach them (i. e. God's Laws) diligently unto thy children, when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, Deut. vi. 7.

For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, Gen. xviii. 19.

Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing also that ye have a master in heaven, Col. iv. 1.

Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; thou shalt fear thy God, Levit. xxv. 43.

Mine eyes shall be on the faithful, that they may dwell with me, Psal. ci. 6.

He that worketh deceit, shall not dwell in my house; he that telleth lies, shall not tarry in my sight, Ver. 7.

On Laying by any Gift to the Uses of Charity.

O Lord, who didst accept of the Widow's mite more than the larger offerings of the Rich, because she gave it with a better Heart and greater Love,
X accept

accept also this small oblation of thy Servant : I cannot say it is all my Living, but I trust, through the assistance of thy Grace, I am ready to part with all when my obedience to any of thy commands calls for it, or I cannot keep any part without offending thee, the Lord and Proprietor of all.

Lord, while I possess any talents of Power or Riches, make me a faithful Steward, to dispense a due proportion to the several wants of my poor Brother, and to use the whole as one who must one day give an account to his Lord. But, alas! my whole substance can give but small relief to the innumerable wants of my Fellow-Creatures ; but though I can give but to few, I can pray for all, to that God who is mighty and willing to save.

Some Acts of Intercession for temporal Blessings.

O Most bountiful Lord and Creator, dispense to thy poor Creatures such sorts and degrees of the comforts of this Life, as may most effectually tend to the restoring poor, depraved, disordered mankind to his first Perfection.

Set over thy people such Kings and Rulers as are taught by thee, to minister Judgment, and to seek the welfare of the people they govern ; and bless all such Princes and Governors with Wisdom and Courage, with vigour of Mind and health of Body, and with the just obedience of their Subjects, and victory over their Enemies.

Bless the faithful Shepherds of thy Flock with divine Illumination and Knowledge, and the gift of Utterance,

terance, and such degrees of those gifts and graces bestowed on the first preachers of thy Word, as is suitable to the necessities of a corrupted World; that not seeking themselves, or their own Honour, they may find such favour from Men, as may be most for thy Glory, and the Edification and Salvation of those committed to their Charge.

Establish and reward the faithful Counsellor, the just Judge, and diligent Magistrate, with the increase of Power, Riches, and Honour.

Bless the Fleets and Armies sent out to repress Tyranny, or to defend Truth and Justice, the Oppressed and Persecuted, with Victory, and a secure and equitable Peace.

Bless the pious Husbandman with fruitful Seasons, and plenty of Corn; and the religious Merchants and Seamen, with prosperous Winds and happy Returns; the upright Tradesman and Artificer, with an increasing Success, and just encouragement for their Industry; the honest Labourer, with a sufficient store for Life; and so restrain the spirit of Avarice, that none may want Food to eat, or Raiment to put on, when thy Providence has provided in this thy world enough and to spare for all its Inhabitants.

And since thou hast commanded us to pray for our daily Bread, as well as for the pardon of our Sins, and hast said, Thou wilt be intreated even for those Mercies and Deliverances thou wilt to grant, reject not the humble prayer of thy Servant for such temporal good Things, for my Friends, Relations, Benefactors, as in thy Wisdom thou seest good for them. And O let thy blessing accompany those thy

Gifts; and if in thy providence thou art pleased to enlarge the portion of any, O enlarge their hearts also, and direct their minds so to employ them as may be most for thy Glory.

Finally, O Lord, according to thy gracious Promise, add unto all those, from the highest to the lowest, who first seek thy Kingdom and its Righteousness, all such temporal blessings as are needful to their several Places, and may tend to their Sanctification and Salvation, that the profane may no longer deride thy Providence, or say, Doth God regard? Is there knowledge in the most High? But in thy due time so bless with Power and Honour those who honour and obey thy Laws, that all men may say it is thy Work, and that thou Lord hast done it.

O Lord, I confess we are unworthy of those mercies which yet, if we have not, we perish: O help and save us, for thy Truth, and for thy Mercy's sake.

A Morning Prayer for a Family.

O Most great, most glorious and eternal Lord God, thou art righteous in all thy Ways, and holy in all thy Works, infinite in Mercy and Goodness to all that call upon thee in Truth; and hast promised, that where two or three are gathered together in thy Name, thou wilt be in the midst of them.

Look down, we beseech thee, upon us thy unworthy Servants, who are here before thee, to present unto thy divine Majesty, the Morning sacrifice of our unfeigned Praises, acknowledging that in thee we live, and move, and have our Being; that thou art continually pouring out thy Benefits upon us; and
that

that from thy bountiful hand we have received many great and exceeding Mercies.

We desire, O Lord, in an humble sense of thy great Goodness, to bless and praise thy holy Name, for thy manifold favours conferred upon us; and more particularly, O Lord, we adore thy glorious Majesty for preserving us this Night past from the perils of Darkness; for raising us up in Health and Safety, and giving us this opportunity of calling upon thy Name.

Give us Grace, O Lord, we humbly beseech thee, to make a right use and improvement of these, and all thy other Mercies; and though we have hitherto abused the riches of thy Goodness, by living unprofitably under the kind and endearing methods of thy Love, yet grant, O merciful Father, that we may from henceforward live as becomes the Gospel of Christ, by denying all ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and living righteously, soberly, and godly, in this present World.

And because we are not able of our selves to please thee, vouchsafe us, we beseech thee, the assistance of thy holy Spirit, whereby we may be enabled to withstand all the enemies and hindrances of our Salvation, and to bring into subjection those rebellious corruptions that are continually warring against our Souls, and which have too often prevailed against us.

Put away from us, O Lord, whatever is hateful in thy sight; and give us those things that are profitable for our Salvation. Enlighten our Minds, that we may know thee; sanctify our Affections, that we may love thee; and put thy fear into our inward Parts, that we may dread to offend thee. Convince us
X 3
thoroughly,

thoroughly, O Lord, of the great evil of Sin, that being afraid of nothing so much as thy Displeasure, we may endeavour in all things to obey thy blessed Will, and to walk before thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of our Lives.

Wean our Affections, O Lord, from the things of this World ; and whatever our state and condition may be here, give us Grace therewith to be content. In all our passage through this Life, and our manifold concerns about it, grant that in doing our Duty, we may make thee our only Stay and Confidence, our Hope and our Trust, casting all our care upon thee, and entirely resigning our selves to thy good pleasure in all things ; that being anxious for nothing, but the salvation of our Souls, and providing for that time, when all earthly comforts shall vanish away, we may live in thy Fear, and die in thy Favour, and be made partakers of everlasting Happiness, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and only Saviour. *Amen.*

And now, O Lord, we are entring upon the business of that Day, to which thy providence has brought us, we humbly beg leave to commend our selves and all our affairs to thy Blessing and Protection: Enable us, O Lord, to discharge the duties of our several Stations, and in all things to keep a conscience void of offence towards thee and towards Man. Let not the world so far engage our thoughts, as to make us forget the great work we have to do ; but in all our affairs in this Life, in all our Businesses and Employments, let us often remember thee, and that great account we must one day give ; that
being

being duly mindful of thy continual presence with us, we may never dare to do any thing that is displeasing in thy sight.

Guard our Souls, we humbly entreat thee, against the assaults of our spiritual Enemies, and defend them from the power and dominion of Sin; and especially from those Sins that do most easily beset and insnare us.

And because we are but weak and feeble Creatures, and are every moment exposed to a world of Dangers, we beseech the likewise to take care of our Bodies, and to be with us in our going out, and coming in, that no casualty or sad accident (if thou seekest it fitting) may come near to hurt us.

Give us such a measure of Health, and other temporal Blessings, as thou seekest best and most expedient for us; but above all things, give us thy Grace and Favour, that our lives may be holy and comfortable here, and our eternal state happy and glorious with thee hereafter, through the Merits, and for the sake of thy dear Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

An Evening Prayer for a Family.

O Most Glorious and ever blessed Lord God, who inhabitest Eternity, and dwellest in that light which no mortal eye can approach unto; we thy sinful and unworthy Creatures, do with great humility of Soul and Body fall low on our Knees before thee, acknowledging that we are not worthy to appear in thy Presence, nor so much as to lift up our eyes to that place of purity where thou dwellest for evermore.

O Lord, though we are thus unworthy to speak unto thee, yet so infinite and condescending is thy Goodness towards us, as to encourage our addresses to thee, by many gracious promises of Favour and Acceptance. With humble confidence then, O Lord, we presume to approach the throne of thy Grace, humbly beseeching thee, in the name, and for the sake of thy beloved Son, to be merciful unto us in the free pardon and forgiveness of all our Sins.

We acknowledge, O Lord, that we have acted foolishly and wickedly, by doing those things which thou hast forbidden, and by neglecting to do those things which thou hast commanded: we have many ways offended thee, O God, and it is of thy great mercy that we are not consumed; O let that mercy of thine, which has spared us so long, at last lead us to Repentance, that we may forsake our evil Ways, and turn unto thee the Lord our God, before that dreadful day comes upon us, when all opportunity of reconciling our selves to our offended God, shall be far from us.

Give us Grace, O Lord, seriously to consider the great work we have to do, and the uncertainty of that time which thou hast given us to perform it in, that we may not be so foolish as to consume our days in Vanity and Folly, in satisfying our corrupt Inclinations, indulging our vicious Appetites: but grant that we may walk before thee in such a holy and religious manner, with that fear of thy divine Majesty, that dread of thy Displeasure, and with such an earnest solicitude after the things of another Life, that we may daily grow in Grace, and be continually advancing towards a happy Eternity.

Dis-

. Disengage our Affections, O Lord, from the things of this World, which are but of a short continuance, that we may with greater freedom and liberty aspire after the attainment of that Happiness, which is to last for evermore. Shew us the foulness and deformity of Sin, and possess our minds with a lively sense of those dreadful threatnings which thou hast denounced against it, that we may abhor and forsake every evil Way ; and from the consideration of thy great love to Mankind, and those gracious promises thou hast made us, we may in good earnest give up our selves to the love and obedience of thy Commandments, and make it the great study and business of our Lives to serve and please thee in all things.

Give us honest and upright Hearts, such as no interest can seduce, no advantage prevail upon, to deviate from the ways of Truth and Justice ; and to that end restrain us from all immoderate desires of the things of this World, from all Pride and Covetousness, and from an insatiable thirst after Riches, which must unavoidably lead us into many Snares and Temptations. And O be thou pleased so to conduct us by thy good Spirit, through all the Businesses and Employments, through all the Calamities and Troubles of this Life, that (whatever our condition may be in this World) we may not fail to attain that happiness which thou hast prepared for them that love thee.

But, O Lord, we pray not for our selves alone, but, as a testimony of our unfeigned Charity, do beseech thee likewise to extend thy mercy to the whole race of Mankind. Have pity upon all that are in Ignorance and Error, upon those
that

that know thee not, and have never heard of thy Name. Visit them, O Lord, with thy Salvation, and so bring them to the light and knowledge of thy Truth, that they may become the followers of the ever blessed Jesus.

We pray thee more especially to be gracious to this Church and Nation to which belong; give us all grace seriously to repent of the evil of our Ways, that sin and iniquity may not be our Ruin: but that we becoming a peculiar People, zealous of good Works, Religion and Virtue, Peace and Charity, may for ever flourish and increase among us.

Bless our Sovereign Lord King *George*, their Royal Highnesses *Frederick* Prince of *Wales*, the Princess of *Wales*, the Duke, the Princesses, and all the royal Family. Bless all that are put in authority under his Majesty, both in Church and State; grant that all their designs may tend to the advancement of thy Glory, and the happiness and prosperity of these Kingdoms.

Look with Pity and Compassion, O Lord, upon all thy afflicted Servants every where; strengthen and support them under their Calamities, and give them, in thy good time, a happy deliverance out of all their Troubles.

Be merciful, O God, to all our Relations, Friends, and Acquaintance; forgive our Enemies, reward our Benefactors, and grant that we, and all thy people every where, may serve thee, from the highest to the lowest, and at last be made partakers of everlasting Happiness.

To these our Prayers and Intercessions, we desire likewise, O Lord, to add the sacrifice of our unfeigned

feigned praises to thy divine Majesty, acknowledging it to be our bounden duty and service, at all times and in all places, to give thanks unto thee, O Lord, to whose infinite goodness and mercy we owe all the comforts of this Life, all the hopes and expectations of a better.

To thee, O Lord, we stand indebted for innumerable Mercies and Favours, in an humble sense whereof we adore and praise thy glorious Majesty.

Blessed be thy Name, O God, for the continuance of thy mercies to us this Day ; for providing for our Bodies, and taking care of our Souls ; and for delivering us from those many evils that we have most justly deserved.

But above all, we bless and praise thy holy Name for thine inestimable Love, in the redemption of the World by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, humbly beseeching thee, of thy great Goodness, O Lord, to pass by our unworthiness of these thy Mercies, and to continue to us thy gracious Favour and Protection.

Keep us, we beseech thee, this night under the shadow of thy wings, that no evil or sad accident (if it be thy blessed Will) may come near to hurt us. Give us quiet and refreshing Sleep, such as may fit us for the duties of the day following ; and if thou art pleased to add another day to our Lives, grant that we may improve it to thy Glory and the benefit of our precious Souls, through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and only Saviour ; in whose prevailing Name and Words we conclude these our Prayers.

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer for a Child, to be used Morning and Evening.

ALmighty God, who madest me, and hast preserved me to this Hour, (blessed be thy holy Name) look graciously upon me, and bless me, I humbly beseech thee: pardon all my Sins, and forgive whatever I have done amiss, and give me Grace to remember and put in practice my baptismal Vow, by renouncing the Devil and all his Works.

O do thou incline my heart to that which is good, and create in me an utter dislike of all Evil; put thy fear and thy love in my Soul, that I may serve thee, and worship thee, and keep thy Commandments.

Make me dutiful to [my *Father, Mother, &c.*] obedient to my Teachers, humble and reverent to all my Betters; meek and courteous to all People; and enable me to do to others, as I would have them to do to me.

Preserve me from bearing malice or hatred in my Heart, from Lying, and Stealing, Slandering and Evil-speaking, and all evil Thoughts, Words, and Actions. Guide me by thy holy Spirit, that I may live to thy Glory, and when I die, I may attain everlasting Life.

Lord, bless all my Relations and Friends, and save and defend them and me from all dangers [this *Day, Night, and*] evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

A Morning Prayer for a Young Person.

O Eternal Lord God, and heavenly Father, thou art the kind author of my Being; be thou the gracious guide of my Life; my age is simple and unexperienced, O be thou pleased to inspire me with true wisdom from Above, that it may guide and direct me in all my Ways.

I am come into a world full of Snares and Temptations, O do thou fill me with the knowledge and love of thy Truth, that it may keep me from the ways that lead to destruction.

I render unto thee unfeigned thanks for all the blessings I daily receive from thee, and for thy particular preservation and refreshment of me this Night past.

O Lord, have thou mercy upon me, and forgive me all my Sins; and give me grace to fly all youthful Lusts, and to remember thee, my Creator, in the days of my Youth.

O possess my heart with the fear of thee, and dependence upon thee. Let me always walk as in thy Presence, as considering I must one day die, (I know not how soon) and render an account of all the actions of my Life: possess also my Heart, O my God, with that natural tenderness for my Parents, and those that have the care of me, and with that Christian sense of my Duty towards them, that my language may be respectful, my actions dutiful, and my whole behaviour such, that I may not increase the burden and care of their Life, but prove a Comfort and Blessing to them.

Bless

Bless me, O Lord, in my Learning, and deliver me from Sloth and Idleness, and ill Company, and from all dangers both of Body and Soul, and help me daily to increase in Knowledge, and Wisdom, and all Virtue.

I commend unto thy divine Providence [*my Father, and Mother, my Brethren and Sisters*] all my Friends and Relations, and all this Family, and all Mankind; vouchsafe us, O gracious God, all those Graces and Blessings which thou knowest to be most needful for us.

Unto thee, O my God, do I dedicate my Soul and Body, beseeching thee to take them into thy Care and Protection, that they may be always employed in thy Service, and to thy Glory; that having served thee faithfully in this Life, I may at last obtain Life everlasting, through the merits and mediation of my blessed Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ our Lord; in whose holy Name and Words, I sum up my own and the wants of all Mankind.

Our Father, &c.

An Evening Prayer for a Young Person.

O Almighty God and merciful Father, who willingly hearest the prayers of all those that call upon thee faithfully, I humbly beseech thee to pardon whatsoever thou hast seen amiss in me this Day, in my Thoughts, Words, and Actions, particularly [*here mention Particulars*] assist me, O God, in making it my constant endeavour to resist and conquer every evil Inclination within me, and every Temptation from without.

Help

Help me daily to increase in the knowledge and love of thee, my God, and of my Saviour Jesus Christ.

Shew me the way in which I should walk, whilst I am young, and grant that I may never depart from it.

Bless to me, I pray thee, whatsoever good instructions have at any time been given me; help me carefully to remember them, and seriously to practise them, that I may be ever growing in Knowledge, Wisdom, and in Goodness.

Bless and defend and save the King, and all the royal Family, and all orders of Men amongst us, from the highest to the lowest. Lord, give them all Grace, in their several Stations, to be instrumental to thy Glory, and the publick Good.

Accept, O Lord, of my humblest Praise and Thanksgiving for all the goodness thou hast this Day, or at any time shewed me; for all the helps of preventing or restraining Grace thou hast vouchsafed me; for whatever I have done which is in any measure acceptable to thee; for whatever progress I have made in my Learning; for thy preservation of me, from all the miseries and dangers which frail mortality is every Moment exposed to; particularly for [*Here mention any particular mercy God has bestowed upon you.*]

I humbly commit my Soul and Body to thy care this Night, begging thy gracious Protection and Blessing.

And all these Mercies and Blessings which I ask for my self, I heartily desire for all my Relations and Friends, and for all Mankind. Let it please thee

thee to guide us all in this Life present, and to conduct us safe to thy heavenly Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour: in whose most holy Name and Words, I conclude these my imperfect Prayers.

Our Father, &c.

A Morning Prayer for a Servant.

O Lord my God, the great Creator and Preserver of all Mankind; thou hast preserved me this Night past, which might have been my last; and for this, and all thy other Mercies, my Soul does bless and praise thy Name.

Thou hast given me another Day, O give me grace to spend it to thy Honour and Glory; O let it not increase my Guilt and the number of my Sins; but enable me to work in it the work for which thou hast sent me into the World, before the night of Death cometh wherein I cannot work.

The number of my Sins, I confess, is too great already; they would sink my Soul down into Hell, if the blessed Jesus had not loved me, and given himself for me; O do thou therefore mercifully, for his sake, grant me thy Grace, that I may not increase the number of my Transgressions, by running heedlessly or knowingly, into the commission of any Sin.

O God, thou holy God, thou witness of all my Actions, and judge of all my Thoughts, and Affections, what would become of me, if thou shouldst enter into strict Judgment with me? How should I stand before thy Tribunal, covered with the guilt and shame of so many Transgressions? Lord, I re-

pent.

pent, increase thou my Repentance ; I repent of-----
[Here mention those sins which most burden thy conscience.]

O be thou reconciled unto me, and pardon me, I beseech thee, by the Merits and Intercession, by the Agony and Passion, and all the painful sufferings of thy dear Son ; and not only pardon my Sins, but deliver me, I beseech thee, from the Power and Dominion of them.

O assist me to break off those chains of Lusts and worldly Cares, with which I have been tied and bound ; I am conscious to my self of great Weakness and Frailty ; O do thou confirm and strengthen me, who alone art able to do it.

Make me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me ; give me a true Faith, and enflame my heart with holy Love, that I may delight in thy Commandments, that I may walk before thee in Uprightness and Fear, in Faithfulness and Honesty, diligently seeking thee, constantly and cheerfully depending upon thee, and doing the duty of my Place, not with Eye-service, but with singleness of Heart, as knowing that I shall be accountable to thee at the last Day, as well for those duties which I owe my Master and Mistress, as for those which are more immediately to be paid to thee.

O Lord, keep me, I beseech thee, from all opprobrious and reproachful Language, from all Lying and Slandering, and from all unjust and deceitful Actions ; and after I have done all, O Lord, suffer me not to fall short of my Reward, through Pride or Ingratitude ; but make me always thankful, always humble, always contented ; neither withhold from thee the Praise due to thy infinite Bounty

and Mercy, nor from Man the Thanks due to him, for any act of Kindness or Charity towards me.

Help me, O my God, so to walk before thee, that my Soul may enjoy a true Liberty, that my life may be full of Comfort, my death of Peace, and my eternity of Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And, O my God, bless not me only, but this whole Family to which I belong; Thou that art the God of Peace and Love, sow in all our hearts the seeds of unfeigned Charity, that we may all enjoy the comfort of a mutual Affection, and of a mutual Assistance and Aid in our several Places.

O Lord, possess every Soul of this Family with a just sense of Duty towards thee and towards Man, that all of us may be living members of thy blessed Son; and being protected by thy good Providence, directed by thy Word, and assisted by the influence of thy holy Spirit, we may all of us at last meet in the Family of Heaven, where we shall adore and praise thee, love and enjoy thee to all Eternity, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord: In whose most holy Name and Words I continue to pray as he hath taught me, saying,

Our Father, &c.

An Evening Prayer for a Servant.

O My God, my Strength, and the rock of my Salvation; the day is gone, and the night is come; O give me grace to remember that this life will ere long be past too, and that death will surely come; grant that I may so live, that my work may be then finished, and I may have nothing else to do when I come

come to die, but go to my Rest, where I shall be invested with Liberty and Glory eternal.

How does my Soul praise thee, O Lord, for thy great Goodness, and all the precious Promises of thy Gospel? Thou hast called me indeed to be a Servant, but thou hast called me to be a Son too, and an heir of eternal Life. Thou hast not indeed given me any great portion of the wealth and honour of this Life; but thou hast given the blessed Jesus to be my Redeemer, and thy holy Spirit to be my Sanctifier, which are Blessings far more valuable than all the riches and splendor of this World.

O do thou continue to me the light of thy Countenance, thy Grace, and thy Truth, and I shall think my self happy, though my condition should be very mean in this World.

But, O my God, how often is this chearful and blessed light obscured by my Sins and Infirmities? O my God, I have forgotten thee too too often, though thou hast given me my Being; I have forgotten thee, though thou gavest thine own Son to redeem me; not only to free me from the punishment due to my Sins, but from the slavery and dominion of them, and to procure for me Life Eternal.

I have feared the displeasure of Man, whose breath is in his Nostrils, more than I have feared thine. O thou just and holy Judge of Mankind, I have been more solicitous for the bread that perishes, than for thy Favour, which is better than life it self: I have done foolishly and wickedly, in that I have broken thy holy Laws and Commandments, and have many times, I confess, sinned against my Knowledge, thy

Word, and the motions of thy holy Spirit. [*Here mention thy particular Sins.*]

And besides all this, (vain and senseless Creature that I am) I have been apt to repine and murmur at thy Providence, and to be discontented with my Condition: But I repent, O my God; I repent of all my Sins and Wickedness, and, by the assistance of thy Grace, will do works meet for Repentance, and serve thee in Truth, and with an upright Heart.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy upon me, and forgive me these and all other my Offences, and give me grace to keep upon my Watch, and guard against them: enable me sincerely to endeavour to repair and reform them, as much as in me lies, that I may every day grow and increase in Goodness, and be so much the fitter for Death, the nearer I do every day approach to it; and whenever it comes, let it find me, O Lord, in a disposition and frame of Spirit fit to die, possess'd with an unshaken Faith, with an humble resignation and submission of Mind, with a holy contempt of Earth, and a devout love of Heaven.

In the mean time, O thou keeper of *Israel*, thou who never slumberest nor sleepest, watch over me and this whole Family; let thine Angels pitch their tents about us this Night; let us lie down securely; and let our sleep be sweet and refreshing to us, for Jesus Christ's sake; in whose most holy Name and Words I beg all things needful, both for my self and all that I am any way bound to pray for, saying, as he hath taught me,

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer to be used by a Servant at any time of the Day, or that may be added to any other Devotions.

O Lord my God, Thou hast made me, and dost dispose of all things in a wise and excellent Order; thou hast placed me in the condition of a Servant; thou hast appointed me this my Station: O grant that I may discharge the duties of it zealously and faithfully.

Enable me to imploy and improve the talents which thou hast entrusted me with, to thy Glory, and the good of my own Soul, and make me useful and serviceable, honest and diligent in the station to which it has pleased thee to call me. O suffer me not to fall into any breach of trust with Man, lest I fall under the vengeance of thee my God.

O God, who givest Grace to the Humble, but resistest the Proud, keep me, I beseech thee, from Pride and Frowardness, from Discontent and Murmuring, and give me a meek and humble Spirit.

And, O thou lover of Peace and Concord, enable me, I beseech thee, to live in brotherly Affection, Unity, and Concord with my fellow-Servants; and grant that we may be a mutual comfort and assistance to one another, as well in our spiritual, as temporal Concerns.

Lord, let not my Soul, by any Connivance or Encouragement, or any other act of mine, lie under the guilt of being the occasion of the Discontent, or Injury, or ruin of any Family or Person; but make me

me an instrument of Peace and Prosperity wherever I am: I know, O Lord, that humility and industry are virtues that are not so pleasing to a carnal Mind; but do thou make me sensible how great the recompence of Self-denial, and all other Virtues, will one day be.

Make me, O Lord, to remember, that I am always in thy Sight, and that thou dost ponder all my Paths; that I may be fully convinced, that both my temporal and eternal interest depends upon a faithful and conscientious performance of my Duty; that so I may not be seduced or discouraged by any Temptation whatever; but still looking up to God, and having regard to the recompence of Reward, I may run with patience the race that is set before me, through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the fullest sense of whose words I pray to be heard, as for myself, so for all Mankind.

Our Father, &c.





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